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THESES

PRESENTED TO THE SECOND WORLD CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

(Petrograd — Moscow July 1920).

EDITIONS
of the Communist International
Petrograd, Smolny, 1920

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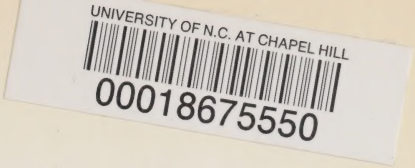

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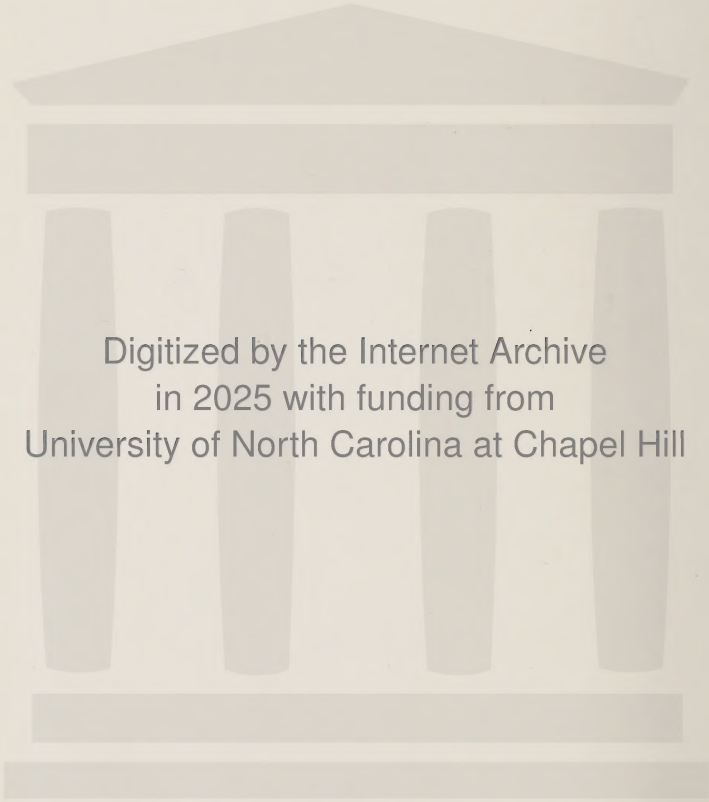
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Theses of the Executive Committee of the Communist International on the Role of the Communist Party in the Workers' Revolution.

The first year of work of the Communist International was occupied chiefly in the propagation of Communist ideas. At present, just before the Second Congress, the International is entering upon a new phase. A period of organisation and construction lies before us. Until now in different countries there have been only vague tendencies and ideas about Communism among the working people. But at present, in almost all the countries where there is a serious workers' movement, one may now perceive not only tendencies and influences, but Communist organizations and parties. This circumstance should persuade the Second Congress of the Communist International to take a perfectly clear and precise position on the question concerning the part to be played by the Communist Party before and after the moment when the power passes into the hands of the working class. Among some of the adherents of Communism (the "Left" party in Germany, the I. W. W.

in America, several groups of revolutionary syndicalists and anarchists) there exists a certain tendency to undervalue the work of the Communist Party, as such, and even a direct denial of the necessity of any Communist Party at all. This should serve as an additional motive for the Second Congress to answer the above question precisely and definitely.

* * *

1. The Communist Party forms part of the working class; namely, its most advanced, most intelligent and therefore most revolutionary part. The Communist Party is created by selecting the best, most intelligent, most self-sacrificing and most farseeing workers. The Communist Party has no other interests but those of the working class. It differs from the general mass of the workers in that it takes a general view of the whole historical march of the working class, and at all the turns of the road it endeavours to defend the interests, not of separate groups or professions, but those of the working class as a whole. The Communist Party is the organized political lever by means of which the more advanced part of the working class directs the whole mass of workers in the right direction.

2. As long as the governing power is not in the hands of the workers, as long as the proletariat has not consolidated its rule once

for all and guaranteed the working classes from a return of the capitalist order, so long will the Communist Party as a rule have only a minority of the workmen in its ranks. Up to the time when the power will be in its grasp, and during the period of transition, the Communist Party may under favourable conditions enjoy an undisputed political influence over the working masses and the semi-proletarian class of the population; but it will not be able to organize and enroll them in its ranks. Only when the dictatorship of the workers has deprived the bourgeois elements of such powerful weapons as the press, the schools, parliament, church, the governing apparatus, etc., only when the final defeat of the capitalist order will become an evident fact — only after that will all or almost all the workers enter the ranks of the Communist Party.

3. A sharp distinction must be made between the conception of "party" and "class". The members of the "Christian" and the Liberal trade unions of Germany, England and other countries are undoubtedly part of the working class. More or less considerable circles of working people, followers of Scheidemann, Gompers & Co., are also part of the working class. Owing to certain historical conditions, the working class has numerous reactionary groups and strata. The task of Communism is not to adapt itself to such retrograde specimens of

the working class, but to raise the whole of it to the level of the Communist advance guard. The confounding of these two conceptions can only lead to the greatest mistakes and confusion. Thus, for instance, it is clear that notwithstanding the frame of mind or prejudices of a certain part of the working masses during the imperialistic war, the workers' party was forced to act against such prejudices in defending the interests of the workers, which demanded from the workers' party a declaration of war against war.

Thus in the beginning of the Imperialistic war of 1914, the social-traitor parties of all countries, while upholding the capitalists of their „own" countries, unanimously declared that such was the will of the people. They forgot at the same time that even if this were so, the duty of the workers' party would have been to go against such a frame of mind of the majority of the workers, and to defend the interests of the workers at whatever cost. At the very beginning of the XXth century the Russian Mensheviks (minimalists) of the time (the so-called "economists"), denied the possibility of an open political struggle against Tsarism, on the ground that the working class in general was not capable of understanding the meaning of a political struggle.

4. The Communist International is firmly convinced that the collapse of the old "Social Democratic" parties of the Second International

cannot be represented as the collapse of the proletarian party organisations in general. The period of the open struggle for the dictatorship of the workers has created a new party—the Communists.

5. The Communist International emphatically rejects the opinion that the workers could carry out a revolution without having an independent political party of their own. All class struggles are political ones. The object of such a struggle, which inevitably turns into a civil war, is the obtaining of political power. However, such a power cannot be acquired, organised and directed otherwise than by means of some political party. Only in case the workers have for their leader an organized and experienced party, with strictly defined objects, and a practically drawn up program of immediate action, both in internal and foreign policy—then only will the acquisition of political power cease to be a casual episode, but it will serve as starting point for a lasting Communist organisation of the workers.

The same class struggle demands that the general guidance of the various forms of the workers' movement be united in one central organisation. (Labour unions, cooperative associations, cultural-educational work, elections, etc.). Only a political party can be such a unifying and guiding centre. To refuse to create and strengthen such a party and

submit to its dictates, would mean to abandon the idea of unity in the guidance of the separate proletarian groups operating on the different arenas of the fight. Lastly, the class struggle of the proletariat demands a concentrated propaganda, throwing light on the various stages of the fight from the same point of view, and directing the attention of the proletariat at each given moment to the definite tasks to be accomplished by the whole class. This cannot be done without the help of a centralised political apparatus, i. e., without a political party. Therefore the doctrine of the revolutionary syndicalists, and the partisans of the Industrial Workers of the World (I. W. W.), against the necessity of an independent Workers' Party, as a matter of fact has only served and continues to serve the interests of the bourgeoisie and the counter-revolutionary „Social Democrats". In their propaganda against the Communist Party, which the syndicalists and industrialists desire to replace by the labour unions alone, or by shapeless indefinite „general" workers' unions, they approach the opportunists. After the defeat of the revolution in 1905, during the course of several years the Russian Mensheviks proclaimed the necessity of a so-called Labour Congress, which was to replace the revolutionary party of the working class: all kinds of "Labourists" of England and America, while consciously carrying on a bour-

geois policy, are propagating among the workers the idea of creating indefinite shapeless workers' unions instead of a political party. The revolutionary Syndicalists and Industrialists desire to fight against the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, but they do not know how to do it. They do not see that the working class without an independent political party is like a body without a head.

Revolutionary Syndicalism and Industrialism are a step forward only in comparison with the old, musty counter-revolutionary ideology of the Second International. But in comparison with the revolutionary Marxian doctrine, i. e., with Communism, they are a step backwards. The declaration of the "Left" Communists of Germany (in the program - declaration of their Constituent Congress in April) to the effect that they are forming a party but not one in the traditional sense of the word ("Keine Partei im überlieferten Sinne")—is a capitulation before the views of Syndicalism and Industrialism, which are reactionary ones.

6. The Communists fully approve of the formation of the most widely various workers' organisations, not belonging to any particular political party. They consider it their most important task to carry on the work of organisation and instruction within such organisations. But in order that their efforts should bring forth the desired results, and that such

organisations should not become the prey of opponents of the revolutionary proletariat, the most advanced Communist workers should always have their own independent closely united Communist Party, working in an organised manner, and standing up for the general interests of Communism at each turn of events and under every form of the movement.

7. The Communists have no fear of the largest workers' organisations which belong to no party, even when they are of a decidedly reactionary nature (yellow unions, Christian Associations, etc.). The Communist Party carries on its work inside such organisations, and untiringly instructs the workers, and proves to them that the idea of no political party as a principle is consciously cultivated among the workers by the bourgeoisie and its adherents, with the object of keeping the proletariat from an organised struggle for Socialism.

8. The old classical division of the labour movement into three forms (party, labour unions and cooperatives) has evidently served its time. The proletarian revolution in Russia has brought forward the fundamental form of the workers' dictatorship— the Soviets. But the party of the proletariat, that is to say, the Communist Party, must constantly and systematically direct the work of the Soviets as well as of the revolutionised industrial unions.

Those who propose to the Communist Party to "conform" to the Soviets, those who perceive in such "conformation" a strengthening of the "proletarian nature" of the Party, are rendering a bad service both to the Party and to the Soviets, and do not understand the importance of the Party, nor that of the Soviets. The stronger the Communist Party in each country, the sooner will the Soviet idea triumph. Many „independent" and even „right" Socialists profess to believe in the Soviet idea. But we can prevent such elements from distorting this idea, only if there exists a strong Communist Party capable of determining the policy of the Soviets and making them follow it.

9. The Communist Party is necessary to the working class not only before it has acquired power, not only while it is acquiring such power, but also after the power has passed into the hands of the working class. The history of the Russian Communist Party, for three years at the head of such a vast country, shows that the rôle of the party after the acquisition of power by the working class has not only not diminished, but on the contrary, has greatly increased.

10. On the morrow of the acquisition of power by the proletariat, its party still remained, as formerly, a part of the working class. But it was just that part of the class which organised the victory. During twenty years in Russia—thirteen years in Germany—the Communist

Party, in its struggle not only against the bourgeoisie, but also against those Socialists who are the transmitters of bourgeois ideas among the proletariat, has enrolled in its ranks the staunchest, most farseeing and most advanced fighters of the working class. Only by having such a closely united organisation of the best part of the working class was it possible for the party to overcome all the difficulties which arose before the proletarian dictatorship in the days following the victory. The organisation of a new proletarian Red Army, the practical abolition of the bourgeois governing apparatus, and the building in its place of the framework of a new proletarian state apparatus, the struggle against the narrow craft tendencies of certain separate groups of workers, the struggle against local and provincial "patriotism", clearing the way for the creation of a new labour discipline—in all these undertakings the final decisive word was said by the Communist Party, whose members are a living example for the majority of the workers of the way they should go.

11. The necessity of a political party for the proletariat can cease only with a complete suppression of classes. On the way to this final victory of Communism it is possible that the relative importance of the three fundamental proletarian organisations of modern times (party, soviets and industrial unions), shall undergo

some changes, and that gradually a single type of workers' organisation will be formed. The Communist Party, however, will become absorbed in the working class only when Communism ceases to be the object of struggle, and the whole working class shall be Communists.

12. The Second Congress of the Communist International must not only serve to affirm the historical mission of the Communist Party in general, but it must indicate to the international proletariat, in rough draft, what kind of a Communist Party is needed.

13. The Communist International assumes that especially during the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Communist Party should be organised on the basis of a severe proletarian centralism. In order to direct the working class successfully during the long, stubborn civil war, the Communist Party must establish the strictest military discipline within its own ranks. The experience of the Russian Communist Party in its successful leadership of the civil war of the working class during three years, has proved that the victory of the workers is impossible without a severe discipline, a perfected centralisation and the fullest confidence of all the organisations of the party in the leading organ of the party.

14. The Communist Party should be based on the principle of democratic centralisation. The chief principle of the latter is the elective

nature of the lowest unit, the absolute authority of all the decisions of a higher unit upon the one immediately beneath, and a strong party central organ, whose decrees are binding upon all the leaders of party life between party conventions.

15. In view of the state of siege introduced by the bourgeoisie against the Communists, a whole series of Communist Parties in Europe and America are compelled to exist illegally. It must be remembered that under such conditions it may become necessary sometimes temporarily to deviate from the strict observance of the elective principle, and to delegate to the leading party organisations the right of cooptation, as was done in Russia at one time. Under the state of siege the Communist Party cannot have recourse to a democratic referendum among all the members of the Party (as was proposed by part of the American Communists) but on the contrary it should empower its leading central organ to make important decisions in emergencies on behalf of all the members of the party.

16. The doctrine of a wide "autonomy" for the separate local organisations of the party at the present moment only weakens the ranks of the Communist Party, undermines its working capacity and aids the development of petty-bourgeois, anarchistic, centrifugal tendencies.

17. In countries where the power is in the hands of the bourgeoisie or the counter-revolutionary Social Democrats, the Communist Party must learn to unite systematically the legal with the illegal work; but all legal work must be carried on under the practical control of the illegal party. The parliamentary groups of Communists, both in the central as well as in the local government institutions, must be fully and absolutely subject to the Communist Party in general, irrespective of whether the party on the whole be a legal or an illegal organisation at the time. Any delegate who in one form or another does not submit absolutely to the party shall be expelled from the ranks of Communism.

The legal press (newspapers, publications) must be unconditionally and fully subject to the party in general and to its Central Committee. No concessions are admissible in this respect.

18. The fundamental principle of all organisation work of the Communist Party and individual Communists must be the creation of a Communist nucleus everywhere they find proletarians and semi-proletarians — although even in small numbers. In every Soviet of Workers' Deputies, in every labour union, every cooperative institution, workshop, house committee, in every government institution, everywhere, even though there may be only three people sympathising with Communism, a Communist nucleus must

be immediately organised. It is only the power of organisation of the Communists that enables the advance guard of the working class to be the leader of the whole class. Communist nucleii working in organisations adhering to no political party must be subject to the party organisations in general, whether the party itself is working legally or illegally at the given moment. Communist nucleii of all kinds must be subordinate one to another in a strictly hierarchical order and system.

19. The Communist Party almost always begins its work as a party of theory among the industrial workers residing for the most part in cities. For the easier and more rapid victory of the working class it is necessary that the party should also work in the country, in the villages. The Communist Party must carry out its propaganda and organisation work among the agricultural labourers and the poorer farmers. It must especially endeavour to organise Communist nucleii in the rural districts.

* * *

The international organisation of the proletariat will be strong only if in all the countries where the Communists are living and working these conditions of party organisation and activity are accepted. The Communist International invites to its Congress all labour unions which recognise the principles of the Third International

and are ready to break with the yellow International. The Communist International intends to organise an international section composed of the red labour unions which recognise the principles of Communism. The Communist International will not refuse to cooperate with purely nonpolitical workers' organisations desirous of carrying on a serious revolutionary struggle against the bourgeoisie. But at the same time the Communist International will never cease to repeat to the workers of all the world:

1. The Communist International is the chief and essential instrument for the liberation of the working class. In each country there must now be not only Communist groups, or tendencies, but—a Communist Party.

2. In every country there must be only one Communist Party.

3. The Communist Party must be founded on the principle of the strictest centralisation, and during the period of civil war it must introduce military discipline in its ranks.

4. In every place where there are a dozen proletarians or semi-proletarians, the Communist Party must have an organised nucleus.

5. In each nonpolitical organisation there must be a Communist nucleus strictly subordinate to the Party in general.

6. While firmly and faithfully supporting the program and revolutionary tactics of Communism, the Communist Party must always be

closely united with the most widely spreading workers' organisations and beware of sectarianism as much as of lack of principle.

The work in the Soviets as well as in the revolutionary industrial unions must invariably and systematically be guided by the party of the proletariat, i. e., the Communist Party. The organised advance guard of the working class, the Communist Party, serves in the same degree the interests of the economic, political and industrial struggle of the working class as a whole. The Communist Party must be the soul of all industrial unions and Soviets of Workers' Deputies, and all other forms of workers' organisations.

The formation of the Soviets as the chief historically-created form of proletarian dictatorship, does not diminish in the least the leading rôle of the Communist Party in the proletarian revolution. When the German "Left" Communists (see the address of their party to the "German Proletariat", April 14th, 1920, signed "Communist Labour Party of Germany") declared that "the Communist Party must also adapt itself more and more to the idea of Soviets and acquire a proletarian aspect" ("Wird gefordert, dass auch die Partei sich immer mehr dem Rätegedanken anpasst und proletarischen Charakter annimmt" — Kommunistische Arbeiterzeitung, № 54) — this is only an obscure expression of the idea that the Communist Party must become

dissolved in the Soviets and that the latter may be the substitute for the party.

Such an idea is deeply erroneous and reactionary.

In the history of the Russian revolution we have seen a whole period of time, during which the Soviets went against the workers' party and supported the policy of the agents of the bourgeoisie. The same is to be noticed in Germany, and may be the case in other countries also. On the contrary, in order that the Soviets may accomplish their historic mission, the existence of a powerful Communist Party is absolutely necessary, so that it should be able not to „adapt itself" simply to the Soviets, but to exercise an influence on their policy in a decisive manner, to compel them to refuse to "conform" to the bourgeoisie and White Guard Social Democrats.

The Labour Movement, Shop Committees and the Third International.

I.

1. The labour unions, created by the working class during the period of the peaceful development of capitalism, were organizations of the workers for the struggle for the increase of the price of labour at the labour market, and the improvement of labour conditions. The revolutionary Marxists endeavoured by their influence to unite them with the political party of the proletariat, the Social Democracy, for a joint struggle for Socialism. For the same reasons that the international Social Democracy, with a few exceptions, proved to be not an instrument of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat for the overthrow of capitalism, but an organisation which held back the proletariat from revolution in the interests of the bourgeoisie, the labour unions proved to be in most cases, during the war, a part of the military apparatus of the bourgeoisie, helping the latter to pump out of the working

class as much sweat as possible in order that the more abundantly might the blood of the proletariat flow in the interests of capitalist profits. Containing chiefly the skilled workmen, the better paid, limited by their professional narrowmindedness, fettered by a bureaucratic apparatus, which had removed itself from the masses, demoralised by their opportunist leaders, the labour unions betrayed not only the cause of the Social Revolution, but even also the struggle for the improvement of the conditions of life of the workmen organized by them. They set aside the point of view of the industrial struggle against the employers, and replaced it by the program of an amicable arrangement with the capitalists, at any cost whatever. This policy was carried on not only by the independent unions. of England and America, not only by the would-be "Socialist" free industrial unions in Germany and Austria, but by the Syndicalist unions in France as well.

2. The economic consequences of the war, the complete disorganisation of world economy, the insane prices, the unlimited application of the labour of women and children, the aggravation of the dwelling conditions, all these are forcing the large masses of the proletariat into the struggle against capitalism. This struggle is revolutionary warfare, by its proportions and the character that it is assuming more and more every day; a warfare destroying objec-

tively the bases of the capitalist order. The increase of wages, obtained one day by the economic struggle of one or other category of workers, is the next day nullified by the high prices, which must continue to rise, because the capitalist class of the victorious countries, ruining by their policy of exploitation Central and Eastern Europe, is not only not in a position to organize world economy, but is indefatigably disorganising it. For the success of their economic struggle, the larger masses of workers who up to this time have stood apart from the labour unions, are now flowing into their ranks in a powerful stream. In all capitalist countries a tremendous development of the labour unions is to be noticed, which now become organisations of the chief masses of the proletariat, not only of its advanced parts. Flowing into the labour unions, these masses strive to make them their weapons of battle. They compel the labour unions to lead strikes, which flow in a broad wave over the entire capitalist world, constantly interrupting the process of capitalist production and exchange. Increasing their demands in proportion to the rising prices and their own exhaustion, the working masses undermine the bases of all capitalist calculations— that elementary premise of every well-organised economic management. The labour unions, which during the war had been organs of compulsion over the working masses, become in

this way organs for the annihilation of capitalism.

3. The old labour bureaucracy and the old forms of organization of the labour unions are in every way impeding such a change in the nature of the labour unions. The old labour bureaucracy is even now endeavouring to replace the strike methods, which are ever more and more acquiring the character of revolutionary warfare between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, by the policy of arrangements with the capitalists, the policy of long term contracts, which have lost all sense simply in view of the constant insane rise of prices. At the most tense moments of the struggle the labour bureaucracy sows trouble and confusion among the struggling masses of the workers, impeding the fusion of the struggle of various categories of workmen into one general class struggle. In these attempts it is helped by the old organization of the labour unions according to crafts, which breaks up the workmen of one branch of production into separate professional groups, notwithstanding their being bound together by the process of capitalist exploitation. This old system of organization rests on the force of tradition of the ideology of the old labour aristocracy, which is now constantly being weakened by the process of suppression of the privilege of separate groups of the proletariat through the general decay of capitalism. In

this way the professional bureaucracy breaks up the powerful stream of the labour movement into weak streamlets, substitutes partial reformist demands for the general revolutionary purposes of the movement, and on the whole delays the transformation of the struggle of the proletariat into a revolutionary struggle for the annihilation of capitalism.

4. Bearing in mind the rush of the enormous working masses into the labour unions, and also the objective revolutionary character of the economic struggle which these masses are carrying on in spite of the labour bureaucracy, the Communists must join such unions in all countries, in order to make of them conscious organs of the struggle for the suppression of capitalism and for Communism. Every voluntary withdrawal from the industrial movement, every artifical attempt to organise special unions, without being compelled thereto by exceptional acts of violence on the part of the labour bureaucracy, such as expulsion of separate revolutionary local branches of the unions by the opportunist officials, represents a great danger to the Communist movement. It threatens to tear away the most advanced, the most conscious workers from the masses, already on their way towards Communism; it threatens to hand over these masses to the opportunist leaders, playing into the hands of the bourgeoisie... The lukewarmness of the working masses, their

ideological indecision, their tendency to yield to the arguments of opportunist leaders, can be overcome only during the process of the ever-growing struggle, by degrees, as the wider masses of the proletariat learn to understand, by experience, by their victories and defeats, that objectively it is already impossible to obtain human conditions of life on the basis of capitalist methods of management; and by degrees as the advanced Communist workmen learn through their economic struggle to be not only preachers of the ideas of Communism, but also the most determined leaders of the economic struggle of the labour unions — only in this way will it be possible to remove from the unions their opportunist leaders, only in this way will the Communists be able to take the lead of the labour movement and make of it an organ of the revolutionary struggle for Communism. Only in this way can they prevent the division of the labour unions, and replace them by industrial unions — remove the old bureaucracy and replace it by the apparatus of factory-representatives, leaving only the most necessary functions to the center.

5. Placing the object and the essence of labour organizations above their form, the Communists ought not to hesitate before a split in such organizations, if a refusal to split would mean abandoning revolutionary work in the labour unions, and giving up the attempt to

make of them an instrument of revolutionary struggle. But even if such a split should be necessary, it must be carried into effect only at a time when the Communists have succeeded by their incessant warfare against the opportunist leaders and their tactics, by their most active participation in the economic struggle, in persuading the wider masses of workmen that the split is occurring not because of the far-away and as yet incomprehensible aims of the Revolution, but on account of the concrete immediate interests of the working class in the development of its economic struggle. The tactics of the Communists, in case a necessity for split arises, must be a continuous most attentive study of the surrounding conditions, and of the question whether such a split might not lead to the isolation of the Communists from the labour masses.

6. Where a split between the opportunists and the revolutionary labour movement has already taken place before, where, as in America, alongside of the opportunist labour unions, there are unions with revolutionary tendencies—although not Communist ones—there the Communists are bound to support such revolutionary labour unions, to persuade them to abandon Syndicalist prejudices, and to side with the Communist Party, which alone is able to serve as a trustworthy compass in the complicated question of the economic struggle. But the

support of the revolutionary labour unions should not mean for the Communists the leaving of the opportunist labour unions, which are in a state of ferment and passing over to the class struggle. On the contrary, by approaching this evolution of the unions on their way to a revolutionary struggle, the Communists will be able to play the part of an element uniting the politically and industrially organized workmen in their joint struggle for the suppression of capitalism.

The economic struggle of the proletariat becomes a political one during an epoch of the decline of capitalism much quicker than during an epoch of its peaceful development. Every serious economic collision may end in an open revolutionary engagement, in which the workers will be placed face to face with the question of Revolution. Therefore, it is the duty of the Communists in all the phases of the economic struggle, to point out to the workers that the success of the struggle is only possible if the working class conquers the capitalists in open fight and by means of dictatorship proceeds to the organisation of a Socialist order. Consequently, the Communists must strive to create as far as possible complete unity between the labour unions and the Communist Party, and to subordinate the unions to the practical leadership of the Party, as the vanguard of the workers' revolution. For this purpose the Communists

ought to have Communist factions in all the labour unions, and acquire by their means an influence over the labour movement and direct it.

II.

1. The economic struggle of the proletariat for the increase of wages and the improvement of the conditions of life of the masses, is developing more and more into a blind alley. The economic crisis, embracing one country after another in ever-increasing proportions, is showing to even unenlightened workmen that it is not enough to demand an increase of wages and a shortening of the work-hours, that the capitalist class is less capable every day of reestablishing the normal conditions of public economy, and of guaranteeing to the workers at least those conditions of life which it gave them before the world war. Out of this growing conviction of the working masses are born the efforts to create organizations which would be able to commence a struggle for the salvation of the situation by means of workers' control over production, by means of shop committees. This aspiration to create shop committees, which is more and more taking possession of the workmen of different countries, must be supported most energetically by the Communist Parties. Therefore, it is a mistake to form the shop committees out of such workmen only, who are already struggling for the dictatorship

of the proletariat; on the contrary, the duty of the Communist Party is to organize all the workmen on the ground of the economic crisis, and to lead them toward the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat by developing the struggle for workers' control over production, which they all understand.

2. The Communist Party will be able to accomplish this task, if, taking part in the struggle in the shop committees, it will instill into the minds of the masses the consciousness that a systematic reconstruction of the public economy on the basis of a capitalist order, which would mean its new enslavement by the government in favour of the capitalist class, is now totally impossible. The organization of the economic management corresponding with the interests of the working masses, is only possible when the government is in the hands of the working class, when the strong hand of the labour dictatorship will proceed to the suppression of capitalism and to the new Socialist organization.

3. The struggle of the shop committees against capitalism has for its immediate object workers' control over production.

The workers of every enterprise, every branch of industry, no matter what their trade, suffer from the "sabotage" of production on the part of capitalists, who frequently consider it more profitable to stop production, in order that it

might be easier to compel the workmen to agree to unsatisfactory labour conditions, or not to invest new capital in industry at a moment of a general rise in prices. The need to protect themselves against such sabotage of production by the capitalists unites the workmen independently of their political opinions, and therefore the shop committees elected by the workmen of a given enterprise, are the organizations in which the widest masses of the proletariat enter. But the disorganisation of capitalist management is the result not only of the conscious will of the capitalists, but it is in a still greater degree the result of an inevitable decline of capitalism. Therefore in their struggle against the consequences of such a decline, the shop committees must go beyond the limits of control in separate factories. The factory committees of separate factories will soon be faced with the question of workers' control over whole branches of industry and their combinations. And as any attempt on the part of the workmen to exercise a control over the supplying of the factories with raw material, or to control the financial operations of the factory owners, will meet with the most energetic measures against the working class on the part of the bourgeoisie and the capitalist government, the struggle for workers' control over production must lead to the struggle for a seizure of power by the

working class. After such a seizure of power by the proletariat the shop committees will be the first managers of the industry, until the time when general state economic organisations will be formed by which the working class will establish the management of the factories and the direction of the whole economic life of the country from the point of view of the interests of the whole population, and will utilise for this purpose all the scientific forces bequeathed by capitalism.

4. The campaign in favour of the shop committees must be conducted in such a way that in the minds of the popular masses, even not directly belonging to the factory proletariat, there should be instilled the conviction that the bourgeoisie is responsible for the economic crisis, while the proletariat, under the motto of workers' control of industry, is struggling for the organization of production, for the suppression of speculation, disorganization and high prices. The duty of the Communist Parties is to struggle for control over production on the ground of the most insistent questions of the day, the lack of fuel, the transport crisis—to unite the different groups of proletariat and to attract wide circles of the petty bourgeoisie, which is becoming more and more proletarized day by day, and is really suffering extremely from the economic crisis.

5. The shop committees cannot be substitutes for the industrial unions. During the pro-

cess of struggle they may form unions according to the industries, and create a general apparatus for the direction of the struggle. The industrial unions are already now centralized fighting organs, although they do not embrace such wide masses of workmen as the shop committees are capable of, these latter being organizations which are accessible to all the workers of a given enterprise. The division of tasks between the shop committees and the industrial unions is the result of the historical development of the Social Revolution. The industrial unions organize the working masses for the struggle for the increase of wages and shortening of workhours on a national scale. The shop committees are organized for workers' control over production, for the struggle against the crisis, embracing all the workmen of the enterprises; but their struggle can only gradually assume the character of a national one. Only after the seizure of the power will the shop committees be able to become the factory nuclei of industrial unions, which jointly with the local and central labour authorities will form special economic managing organs.

6. The duty of the Communists consists in inspiring the industrial unions and the shop committees with a spirit of determined struggle, and the consciousness and knowledge of the best methods of such struggle — the spirit of Communism. In execution of this duty the

Communists must practically subordinate the shop committees and the industrial unions to the Communist Party, and thus create a proletarian mass organ, a basis for a powerfuly centralised party of the proletariat, embracing all the organisations of the proletarian struggle, leading them all to one aim, to the victory of the working class, to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

III.

1. The labour unions tried to form international unions even in time of peace, because during strikes the capitalists used to invite workers from other countries, as strike-breakers. But the International of the labour unions had only a secondary importance before the war. It made one union support another when needful, it organized social statistics, but it did nothing for the organization of a joint struggle, because the labour unions, under the leadership of opportunists, strove to avoid all revolutionary collisions on an international scale. The opportunist leaders of the labour unions, who each in his own country during the war was the flunkey of his bourgeoisie, are now striving to revive the International of labour unions, attempting to make it the weapon against a direct struggle between world capital and the world proletariat. Under the direction of Legien, Jouhaux, Gompers, they are creating a Labour Bureau of the League of

Nations, that organization of international capitalist robbery. In all countries they are attempting to crush the strike movement by means of laws, compelling the workmen to submit to the arbitration of representatives of the capitalist State.

They are endeavouring to obtain concessions for the skilled workers by means of agreements with the capitalists, in order to break in this way the growing unity of the working class. The Amsterdam International of labour unions is thus a substitute for the bankrupt Second International of Brussels.

The Communist workers who are members of the labour unions in all countries must, on the contrary, strive to create an international battle front of labour unions. The question now is not monetary relief in case of strikes; but when a danger is threatening the working class of one country, the labour unions of the others, being organizations of the larger masses, should all arise to its defense; they should make it impossible for the bourgeoisie of their respective countries to render assistance to the bourgeoisie of the country engaged in the struggle against the working class. The economic struggle of the proletariat in all countries is daily becoming more and more a revolutionary struggle. Therefore the labour unions must consciously use their forces for the support of all revolutionary struggles in their own and in other countries. For this purpose they must not only, in all other

countries, strive to attain, as great as possible, centralisation of their struggle, but they must do so on an international scale by joining the Communist International and uniting into one army the different parts of which shall carry on the struggle conjointly, supporting one another.

Theses of the Executive Committee on the Agrarian Question.

1. No one but the city industrial proletariat, led by the Communist Party, can save the labouring masses in the country from the pressure of capital and landlordism, from dissolution and from imperialistic wars, ever inevitable as long as the capitalist régime endures. There is no salvation for the peasants except to join the Communist proletariat, to support with heart and soul its revolutionary struggle to throw off the yoke of the landlords and the bourgeoisie.

On the other hand the industrial workers will be unable to carry out their universal historic mission, and to liberate humanity from the bondage of capital and from war, if they shut themselves within their separate guilds, their narrow trade interests, and restrict themselves self-sufficiently to a desire for the improvement of their sometimes tolerable bourgeois conditions of life. That is what happens in most advanced countries possessing a "labour aristocracy", which forms the basis the would-be Parties of the

Second International, being in fact the worse enemies of Socialism, traitors to it, bourgeois jingoes, agents of the bourgeoisie within the Labour movement. The proletariat becomes a truly revolutionary class, truly Socialist in its actions, only by acting as the vanguard of all those who work and are being exploited, as their leader in the struggle for the overthrow of the oppressors; and this cannot be achieved without carrying the class struggle into the country, without making the labouring masses of the country all gather around the Communist Party of the town proletariat, without the peasants being educated by the town proletariat.

2. The labouring and exploited masses in the country which the town proletariat must lead on to the fight, or at the least win over on its side, are represented in all capitalist countries by the following classes:

In the first place by the agricultural proletariat, the hired labourers (by the year, by the job, by the day) making their living by wage labour in capitalistic agricultural establishments. The independent organization of this class, separated from the other groups of the country population (in a political, military, professional, co-operative, educational sense) an energetic propaganda among it, in order to win it over to the side of the Soviet power and of the dictatorship of the proletariat — such is the fundamental task of the Communist Parties in all countries.

In the second place the semi-proletariat or small peasants, those who make their living partly by working for wages in agricultural and industrial capitalist establishments, partly by toiling on their own or a rented parcel of land yielding but a part of the necessary food produce for their family. This class of the rural population is rather numerous in all capitalistic countries, but its existence and its peculiar position is hushed up by the representatives of the bourgeoisie and the yellow "Socialists" affiliated to the Second International. Some of these people intentionally cheat the workers, but others follow blindly the average views of the public and mix up this special class with the whole mass of the "peasantry". Such a method of bourgeois deceit of the workers is used more particularly in Germany and France than in America and other countries. Provided that the work of the Communist Party is well organised, this group is sure to side with the Communists, the conditions of life of these half-proletarians being very hard, and the advantages the Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat would bring them being enormous and immediate.

In the third place the little proprietors, the small farmers who possess by the right of ownership or on rent small portions of land which satisfy the needs of their family and of their farming without requiring any additional wage labour. This part of the population as

a class gains everything by the victory of the proletariat, which brings with it: (a) liberation from the payment of rent or of a part of the crops (for instance the métayers in France, the same arrangement in Italy, etc.) to the owners of large estates. (b) Abolition of all mortgages. (c) Abolition of many forms of pressure and dependence on the owners of large estates (forests and their use, etc.). (d) Immediate help for the farming from the proletarian power (permitting use by peasants of the agricultural implements and partly the buildings on the big capitalist estates expropriated by the proletariat, immediate transformation by the proletarian state power of all rural cooperatives and agricultural companies, which under the capitalist rule were chiefly supporting the wealthy and the middle peasantry, into institutions primarily for support of the poor peasantry, that is to say, the proletarians, semi-proletarians, the small peasants), etc.

At the same time the Communist Party should be thoroughly aware that during the transitional period leading from capitalism to Communism, i. e. during the dictatorship of the proletariat, at least some partial hesitations are inevitable in this class, in favour of unrestricted free trade and free use of the rights of private property. For this class, being a seller of commodities (although on a small scale), is necessarily demoralised by profit-hunting and

habits of proprietorship. And yet, provided there is a consistent proletarian policy, and the victorious proletariat deals relentlessly with the owners of the large estates and the landed peasants, the hesitations of the class in question will not be considerable, and cannot change the fact that on the whole this class will side with the proletarian revolution.

3. All the three groups of the agrarian population taken together constitute its majority in all capitalist countries. This guarantees in full the success of the proletarian revolution, not only in the towns but in the country as well. The contrary view is very widely spread, but it holds only by a systematic cheating on the part of bourgeois science and statistics. They hush up by every means any mention of the deep chasm which divides the rural classes we have indicated and the exploiters, the landowners and capitalists, as well as the half proletarians and small peasants on one hand, and the landed peasants on the other. It holds further because of the incapacity and the failure of the heroes affiliated to the yellow Second International and the "labour aristocracy", demoralised by imperialistic privileges, to do genuine propaganda work for the benefit of the proletarian revolution, organizing work among the poor in the country. All the attention of the opportunists was given and is being given now to the arrangement of theoretical and practical agreements

with the bourgeosie, including the landed and the middle peasantry (see about these classes further down) and not to the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeois government and the bourgeois class by the proletariat. In the third place, this view holds by the force of inveterate prejudice possessing already a great stability (and connected with all bourgeois-democratic and parliamentary prejudices), the incapacity to grasp a simple truth fully proved by the Marxian theory and confirmed by the practice of the proletarian revolution in Russia. This truth consists in the fact that the peasant population of the three classes we have mentioned above, being extremely oppressed, parceled and doomed to live in half-savage conditions in all countries, even in the most advanced, is economically, socially and morally interested in the victory of Socialism; but that it will firmly support the revolutionary proletariat only after the proletariat has taken hold of the political power, after it has done away with the owners of the large estates and the capitalists, after the oppressed masses will be able to see in practice that they have an organized leader and helper sufficiently powerful and firm to support and to guide, to show the right way.

4. The "middle peasantry" consists in the economic sense of small landowners who possess, according to the right of ownership or rent, portions of land, which, although small, never-

theless may (1) yield usually under capitalist rule not only a scanty provision for the family and the needs of the farming, but also a possibility to get a certain surplus which, at least in the best years, could be transformed into capital; and (2) need to employ (for instance in a family of two or three members) wage labour. As a concrete example of the middle peasantry in an advanced capitalist country we may take in Germany, according to the registration of 1907, a group with farms tilling from five to ten acres and in which farms the number of hired agricultural labourers makes about a third of the whole number of farms in this group[1]. In France, the country of a greater development of special cultures, for instance the vine yards, requiring special treatment and care, the corresponding group employs wage labour probably in a somewhat larger proportion.

The revolutionary proletariat cannot make it its object, at least for the nearest future, and for the beginning of the period of the proletarian dictatorship, to win this class over to its side. It will be sufficient to neutralise it—to make it take a neutral position in the struggle

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[1] These are the exact figures: number of farms from 5 to 10 acres 652,798 (out of 5,736,082); they have all sorts of hired workers, 487,704 — the number of workers with their families (Familienangehörige) being 2,013,633. In Austria, according to the registration of 1910 there were 383,351 farms in this group, 126,136 of them employing hired labour; 146,044 hired workers, 1,215,969 workers with their families. The total number of farms in Austria amounts to 2,856,349.

between the proletariat and the bourgeosie. The hesitations of this class in siding with one or the other force are inevitable, and in the beginning of the new epoch its preponderent tendency in the advanced capitalist countries will be to side with the bourgeoisie. The ideas and feelings of the possessing class are those prevailing in these countries. This leads to a direct interest in profit-hunting, in "free" trade and private property, and to an antagonistic attitude toward the hired workers. The victorious proletariat will immediately improve the position of this class by doing away with rent and by the abolition of mortgages. The proletarian power should by no means abolish at once private property in most of the capitalist countries, but it will at least not only secure to the small and the middle peasantry the ownership of their portions of land but enlarge these portions, giving the peasants the ownership of the whole area they used to rent (abolition of rent payment).

The combination of such measures with a relentless struggle against the bourgeoisie guarantees the full success of the neutralisation policy. The transition to collective agriculture must be managed with much circumspection and step by step, and the proletarian state power must proceed by the force of example without any violence toward the middle peasantry.

5. The landed peasants (Grossbauern) are capitalists in agriculture, managing their land usually

with several hired labourers. They are connected with the "peasantry" only by their rather low standing of culture, their way of living, their personal manual work on their land. This is the most numerous element of the bourgeois class, and a decided enemy of the revolutionary proletariat. The chief attention of the communist parties in the rural districts must be given to the struggle against this element, to the liberation of the labouring and exploited majority of the rural population from the moral and political influence of these exploiters.

After the victory of the proletariat in the towns this class will inevitably oppose it by all means from sabotage to open armed counter-revolutionary resistance. The revolutionary proletariat must therefore immediately begin to prepare the necessary force for the disarmament of every single man of this class, and together with the overthrow of the capitalists in industry the proletariat must deal a relentless crushing blow to this class. In view of this end it must arm the rural proletariat and organize councils in the country, with no room for exploiters, and a preponderant place reserved to the proletarians and the semi-proletarians.

But the expropriation even of the landed peasants can by no means be an immediate object of the victorious proletariat, considering the lack of material, particularly of technical material and further of the social conditions

necessary for the socialisation of such land. In some probably exceptional cases parts of their estates will be confiscated if they are leased in small parcels, or if they are specially needed by the surrounding small-peasant population. A free use must also be secured to this population, on definite terms, of a part of the agricultural machinery of the landed peasants, etc. As a general rule, however, the state power must leave to the landed peasants their land, confiscating it only in case of resistance to the power of the labouring and exploited peasants. The experience of the Russian proletarian revolution, whose struggle against the landed peasants became very complicated and very long because of a series of particular circumstances, has nevertheless shown that this class has been at least taught what it costs to make the least attempt at resistance, and is now quite willing to serve loyally the ends of the proletarian State. It begins even to be penetrated, although very slowly, by a respect for the power which protects every worker and deals relentlessly with the idle rich.

The special conditions which have complicated and prolonged the struggle of the Russian proletariat against the landed peasantry, after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, consist chiefly in the fact that after the coup d'état of October 25 (November 7, 1917), the Russian revolution traversed a stage of "generally democratic",

actually bourgeois democratic, struggle of the peasantry as a whole against the landowners, and there was further the low standard of living and scarcity of the city proletariat, and finally the enormous distances and exceedingly bad transport conditions. As far as these adverse conditions do not exist in the advanced countries, the revolutionary proletariat in Europe and America must prepare with much more energy and carry out a much quicker and more complete victory over the resistance of the landed peasantry, depriving it of the least possibility to resist. This is of the utmost need, considering that until such a complete, absolute victory is won, the masses of the rural proletariat, the semi-proletarians and the small peasants will not acknowledge the stability of the proletarian State power.

6. The revolutionary proletariat must proceed to an immediate and unconditional confiscation of all the estates of the landowners and the big landlords, that is, of all those who systematically employ wage labour, directly or through their tenants, exploit all the small (and partly sometimes the middle) peasantry in their neighbourhood, do not share in the manual work and are mostly the descendants of the feudal class (the nobility in Russia, Germany, Hungary, the restored seigneurs in France, the lords in England, the former slave-owners in America) or financial magnates who have become partic-

ularly rich, or a mixture of these two classes of exploiters and idlers.

No propaganda can be admitted in the ranks of the communist parties in favour of an indemnity to be paid to the owners of large estates for their expropriation. In the present conditions prevailing in Europe and America this would mean a treason to Socialism and the imposition of a new tax on the labouring and exploited masses, who have already suffered most from the war — which has increased the number of millionaires and multiplied their wealth.

In regard to the management of the estates confiscated by the victorious proletariat from the owners of large landed property, the prevailing practice in Russia, because of economic backwardness, was that of a partition of this landed property for the benefit ot the peasantry, and comparatively rare exceptions were the preservation of the so-called "Soviet Farm", managed by the proletarian State at its expense, and transforming the former wage labourers into workers employed by the State, and into members of the councils managing these Farms. In the advanced capitalist countries the Communist International considers that it should be a prevailing practice to preserve the large agricultural establishments and manage them on the lines of the "Soviet Farms" in Russia.

But it would be the greatest mistake to exaggerate or to standardize this rule, and never to admit the free gift of a part of the land expropriated from the neighbourhood.

In the first place, the usual reason against it, pointing to the technical advantage of the big farming, amounts very often to a substitution of the worst opportunism to an undeniable theoretical truth, which is treason to the revolution. The proletariat has no right, whenever the success of the revolution is at stake, to halt because of a temporary decrease of production, just as the bourgeois enemies of slave ownership in North America did not halt because of the temporary falling off of the cotton industry as a result of the civil war of 1863-1866. The bourgeoisie cares only for industrial production as such, whereas the working and exploited population is chiefly concerned with the overthrow of the exploiters and the securing of conditions which would give a chance to the workers to work for their own benefit, and not the benefit of the capitalist. To secure the victory of the proletariat and its stability, is the first and the fundamental task of the proletariat. And there is no safeguard of this stability possible without the neutralisation of the middle peasantry, and without securing the support of a large part if not of the whole mass of the small peasantry.

In the second place not only the enlargement but even the preservation of large production in agriculture requires a fully developed coun-

try proletariat with a ripe revolutionary consciousness, a thorough professional training and an experience in political organisation. Wherever such conditions are not available and there is no possibility to entrust the work to conscious and competent workers, all experiments of a hasty transition to the management by the State of large farming establishments would only compromise the proletarian power. The organisation of "Soviet Farms" requires an extreme care and a solid preparation.

In the third place all capitalist countries, even the most advanced, have still some remnants extant of medieval forms of semi-servitude, exploiting the small peasants of the neighbourhod for the benefit of the owners of large estates, as for example the "Instleute" in Germany, the "métayers" in France, the farmers paying the rent out of the profits in the United States (not only the negroes are being exploited in the Southern States in this particular way, but also the whites). In such cases the proletarian state must transfer the land rented by small peasants to the former farmers for their free use, as there is no other economic and technical base, and it cannot be created all at once

If just at first after the proletarian coup d'état the immediate confiscation of the big estates becomes absolutely necessary, and moreover also the banishment or the internment

of all land-owners as leaders of the counter revolution and relentless oppressors of the whole country population, the proletarian power, in proportion to its consolidation not only in the towns but in the country as well, must systematically strive to take advantage of all the forces of this class, of all those who possess valuable experience, learning, organisational gifts, and must use them (under special control of the most reliable communist workers) to organise the gross agriculture on Socialist principles.

7. The victory of Socialism over capitalism, the consolidation of Socialism will be definitely guaranteed at the time when the proletarian State power after having definitely subdued all resistance of the exploiters and secured for itself a complete solidity and full submission will reorganise the whole industry on the base of gross collective production and a new technical base (founded on the electrification of agriculture). This alone will afford a possibility of such a radical help in the technical and the social sense, accorded by the town to the backward and dispersed country, that this help will create a material base for an enormous increase of the productivity of agricultural and the general farming work, and will incite the small farmers by the force of example and the care for their own profit to pass to the gross collective machine agriculture. This undeniable theoretical truth, nominally acknowl-

edged by all Socialists, is in fact being distorted by the opportunism prevailing in the yellow Second International and among the leaders of the German and the English "Independents", as well as the French Longuetists, etc. The distortion consists in turning the attention to a comparatively distant and beautifuly rosy future, driving it away from the immediate problems of the present hard transition period and the preparation for this future. In practice this amounts to the preaching of a conciliation with the bourgeosie and "social peace", that is to say of complete treason to the cause of the proletariat struggling now under conditions of unheard-of destruction and pauperization created all over the world by the war and in the face of an unheard-of enrichment and impudence of a batch of millionaires caused by the same war.

Most particularly in the country a real possibility of successful struggle for socialism requires in the first place that all Communist parties educate in the industrial proletariat the consciousness of the necessity of sacrifice on its part and the readiness to sacrifice itself for the overthrow of the bourgeosie and the consolidation of the proletarian power. The dictatorship of the proletariat is based on the proletariat knowing how to organize and to lead the working and the exploited masses, and the vanguard being ready for the greatest sacrifices and for heroism. In the second place a

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possibility of success requires that the labouring and the most exploited masses in the country experience an immediate and great improvement of their position caused by the victory of the proletariat and at the expense of the exploiters. Unless this is done, the industrial proletariat cannot depend on the support of the country and cannot secure the provisionment of the towns with foodstuffs.

8. The enormous difficulty of organisation and education for the revolutionary struggle of the agrarian labouring masses placed by capitalism in conditions of particular oppression, dispersion and often a middleaged dependence, require from the Communist Parties a special attention in regard for to the strike movement in the rural districts. It requires an enforced support and a wide development of mass strikes of the agrarian proletarians and half proletarians. The experience of the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917, confirmed and enlarged now by the experience of Germany and other advanced countries, shows that only the development of mass strike struggle (under certain conditions the small peasants are also to be drawn into these strikes) will shake the inactivity of the country population, arouse a class consciousness and the consciousness of the necessity of class organisation in the exploited masses in the country, and show them the obvious practical use of their joining the town workers.

The Congress of the Communist International denounces as traitors those Socialists—unfortunately there are such not only in the yellow Second International but also among the three most important European parties who have left the Second International — who are not only indifferent in regard to the strike struggle in the country but who oppose it (as does Kautsky) on the ground that it might cause a falling-off of the production of foodstuffs. No programs and no solemn declarations have any value if the fact is not there in evidence, testified by actual deeds, that the Communists and the labour leaders know how to put above all the development of the proletarian revolution and its victory, and are ready to make the utmost sacrifices for the sake of this victory. Unless this is a fact, there is no issue, no escape from starvation, dissolution and new imperialistic wars.

It is also necessary to mention in particular that the leaders of the old Socialism and the representatives of the "Labour aristocracy", who are making now verbal concessions to Communism and pass even nominally into its ranks to preserve their popularity in the working masses, which are becoming rapidly revolutionised, that these all are to be tested in regard to their allegiance to the proletarian cause, and their ability to take responsible posts in a work where the development of revolutionary consciousness and the revolutionary

struggle is of a particular keenness, where the resistance of the landowners and the bourgeoisie (landed peasants, exploiters) is particularly violent, where the difference between the conciliatory Socialists and the revolutionary Communists shows with the greatest clearness.

9. The Communist parties must make all efforts possible to start as soon as possible setting up councils in the country, and these councils must be chiefly composed of hired labourers and half-proletarians. Only in connection with the mass strike struggle and by means of the most oppressed class will the councils be able to serve fully their ends and become sufficiently firm to dominate (and further on to include into their midst) the small peasants. But if the strike struggle is not yet developed, and the ability to organise the agrarian proletariat is weak because of the hard oppression by the land owners and the landed peasants, and also because of the want of support from the industrial workers and their unions, the organisation of the soviets in the rural districts will require a long preparation by means of creating small Communist cells, of enforced propaganda expounding in a most popular form the demands of the Communists and illustrating the reasons of these demands by specially convincing cases of exploitation and pressure, by systematic excursions of industrial workers into the country, etc.

Preliminary Draft of some Theses on the National and Colonial Questions.

The abstract or formal raising of the question of equality in general, including national equality, is inherent in bourgeois democracy by its very nature. Under the aspect of equality of human beings in general bourgeois democracy proclaims the formal or juridical equality of the proprietor and the proletarian, the employer and the employed to the great deception of the oppressed classes. This idea of equality, which is a reflection of the relations of industrial production, is transformed by the bourgeoisie into an instrument of struggle against the abolition of classes on the pretext of an absolute equality among human beings. A real demand for equality can be expressed only by a demand for the abolition of classes.

2. In conformity with its task of a struggle against bourgeois democracy and the denunciation of its lies and hypocrisy, the Communist Party, as the conscious leader of the struggle of the proletariat to cast off the yoke, must in the national question also consider chiefly not the abstract and formal principles, but, first, make a precise record of the historical and first of all the economical conditions of a people; second, it must distinctly separate the interests of the oppressed classes, the worker, the employed, from the general conception of national interests as a whole, which only mean the interests of the ruling class; third, it must make a similar clear separation of the oppressed-dependent nations not possessing equal rights with other nations, from the oppressing and ruling sovereign nations, as a counterweight to bourgeois-democratic lies, which screen the colonial and financial enslavement of a tremendous majority of the earth's population, by an

insignificant minority of the richest and most intellectually advanced capitalist countries, such enslavement being inherent in the epoch of capitalism and imperialism.

3. The imperialistic war of 1914-1918 has shown with especial clearness to all the nations and oppressed classes of the world the deceitfulness of bourgeois-democratic phrases, practically proving that the treaty of Versailles of the illustrious "western democracies" is a still more barbarous and base violation of the weaker nations than the Brest-Litovsk treaty of the junkers and the Kaiser. The League of Nations and the entire post-war policy of the Entente demonstrate this truth even more sharply and clearly, strengthening everywhere the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat of the advanced countries, and the worker masses of the colonial and dependent countries, and accelerating the dissipation of all bourgeois-national illusions regarding the possibility of a peaceful existence and the equality of nations under capitalism.

4. It follows from the above fundamental propositions that the cornerstone of the Communist International's national and colonial policy must be the uniting of the proletarian and working masses of all nations and countries in a joint revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the landowners and the bourgeoisie. Only such a union can guarantee the victory over capitalism without which it is impossible to suppress national inequality and oppression.

5. The world political situation has placed the dictatorship of the proletariat on the order of the day, and all the events of international politics are inevitably concentrated around one central point, namely, the warfare of the world bourgeoisie against the Russian Soviet Republic, which is grouping around itself on the one hand the Soviet movements of the advanced workmen of all countries, and on the other hand all the national-liberation movements of the colonies and the oppressed nationalities, which have passed through a bitter experience and see that there is no help for them

except in the victory of the Soviet power over world imperialism.

6. Consequently at the present moment one cannot stop at a simple recognition or proclamation of the necessity for a union between the workers of different nations, but it is necessary to carry out a policy for a close union between all the national and colonial liberation movements and Soviet Russia, determining the form of such union in conformity with the development of the Communist movement among the proletarians of each country, or the bourgeois-democrat liberation movement of the workmen and peasants in the retrograde countries, and among the backward nationalities.

7. Federation is the transitional form towards a complete union of the workers of different countries. Federation has proved its efficiency in practice in respect to the relations between the R. S. F. S. R. (Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic) and other Soviet republics (Hungary, Finland, Latvia, in the past, and Aserbeidjan, Ukraine at present), as well as inside the R. S. F. S. R., in respect to nationalities which had neither a separate state order nor autonomy (for instance, the Bashkir ond the Tartar autonomous republics within the R. S. F. S. R., created in 1919 and 1920.

8. The duty of the Communist International in this respest consists in the further development and in stuby and verification by experience of these new federations, arising outside the Soviet order and Soviet movement. Acknowledging federation as a transition form towards a complete union, it is necessary to make efforts to attain a closer federative union, bearing in view, first, the impossibility of defending the existence of Soviet Republics, surrounded by the imperialistic countries of the whole world, incomparably stronger in military power, without a close union of all the Soviet Republics; second, the necessity of a close economic union of Soviet Republics, without which the restoration of the productive forces destroyed by imperialism, and the guaranteeing of the well-

being of the workers, is irrealisable; third, the tendency towards the creation of a single economic management regulated on a general plan by the proletariat of all nations, as a whole; this tendency visibly manifested itself already under the capitalist order, and undoubtedly deserves further development and final perfection under Socialism.

9. In respect to internal state relations, the national policy of the Communist International cannot be limited by the simply formal, purely declarative and in no wise binding recognition of the equality of nations, like that of the bourgeois-democrats—either calling themselves such openly, or passing under the name of Socialists like the Socialists of the Second International.

Not only in the whole propaganda activity of the Communist Party—both in the parliaments and out of them—must the constant violations of the rights of nations and guarantees of rights of nationalist minorities occurring in all the capitalist states, notwithstanding their "democratic" constitutions, be infallibly denounced, but it is necessary also, *first*, to explain constantly that the Soviet order can alone be in a position to establish the equality of nations, uniting first the proletarians, and afterward the whole mass of workers, in the struggle against the bourgeoisie; second, all the Communist Parties must render a direct assistance to the revolutionary movements of the dependent or subordinated nations (for instance, in Ireland, to the negroes in America, etc.), and in the colonies.

Without this last and specially important condition, the struggle against the oppression of the dependent nations and colonies, and likewise the recognition of their rights to a separate existence as states, is only a deceitful signboard, such as we see in the parties of the Second International.

10. The recognition of internationalism verbally and its substitution in practice, in all the propaganda, canvassing and other practical work by petty bourgeois na-

tionalism and pacifism, constitute a habitual occurrence not only among the parties of the Second International but among those who have left it, and even frequently among such who now call themselves Communists. The struggle against this evil, against the more deeprooted petty bourgeois-national prejudices, becomes of paramount importance the more pressing the necessity becomes to transform the dictatorship of the proletariat from a national basis (i. e., in one country only, not capable of exercising an influence over world politics) into an international one, a dictatorship of the proletariat of at least several advanced countries, capable of exercising a decisive influence over world politics. Petty bourgeois nationalism declares that internationalism is a recognition of the equality of the rights of nations and nothing else, preserving (without mentioning the purely verbal nature of such a declaration) intact all national egoism; whereas proletarian internationalism demands, first, the subordination of the interests of the proletarian struggle in one country to the interests of such struggle on a world scale; secondly, the capacity and readiness on the part of a nation realising a victory over the bourgeoisie to make the greatest national sacrifices for the overthrow of international capitalism.

Thus in the countries of the capitalist order, without labour parties representing really the advance guard of the proletariat, the struggle against the opportunist and bourgeois-pacifist perversions of the idea and policy of internationalism, is the first and most important duty.

11. In respect to the more backward countries and nations with prevailing feudal or patriarchal and patriarchal-peasant relations, it is necessary to bear in mind especially:

(a) The necessity for all Communist parties to render assistance to the bourgeois-democratic liberation movement in such countries; especially this duty falls to the lot of the workers of such countries upon which the backward nation depends, colonially or financially;

(b) The necessity of a struggle against the clergy and other reactionary and mediaeval influences possessing an influence in such backward countries;

(c) The necessity of a struggle against Pan-Islamism and such tendencies, which strive to unite the liberation movement against European and American imperialism with a strengthening of the position of the khans, landowners, moolahs, etc.

(d) The necessity of supporting the peasant movement in backward countries against the landowners, against the possession of large estates, against all customs and remnants of feudalism, and of striving to give the peasant movement a revolutionary nature, bringing about a closer union between the West European Communist proletariat and the revolutionary movement of the peasants in the east, the colonies and in the backward countries in general;

(e) The necessity of a decisive struggle against the tendency to dress up the bourgeois-democratic liberation tendencies in the backward countries in the colours of Communism; the Communist International must support the bourgeois-democratic national movements in the colonies and backward countries only on the condition that the elements of the future proletarian parties, Communist in name only, should be grouped and educated in the knowledge of their special tasks—those of a struggle against the bourgeois-democratic movements within their nation; the Communist International may enter into a temporary union with the bourgeois-democracy of colonies and backward countries, but not intermingle with it, and invariably preserve the independence of the proletarian movement even in its most primitive form;

(f) The necessity of an ever-constant explanation and denunciation among the working masses of all countries, and especially all backward countries, of the deceit which is systematically practised by the imperialistic powers; which, under the pretext of creating politically independent nations, really create countries completely depending

on them economically, financially and in a military respect; under the present international conditions there is no other help for dependent and weak nations than a union of Soviet Republics.

12. The century-long oppression exercised over the colonial and weaker nationalities by the imperialistic powers has left in the worker masses of the oppressed countries not only a bad feeling but a mistrust towards the oppressors in general, including the proletariat of such nations. The base betrayal of Socialism by the majority of the official leaders of this proletariat in 1914-1918, when, under the term "defense of the fatherland," the social-chauvinists concealed the defense of the "rights" of their "own" bourgeoisie to oppress and rob the colonies and financially dependent countries, could not but strengthen this perfectly just mistrust. On the other hand, the more backward a country is, the stronger developed is its small agricultural production, its patriarchality and provincialism inevitably reinforcing the especial strength and stubborness of the deepest of petty bourgeois prejudices, namely, national egoism and national narrowmindedness. As such prejudices can only disappear with the disappearance of imperialism and capitalism in the more advanced countries, and after a radical change in the whole basis of the economic life of the backward countries, the dying out of such prejudices cannot but proceed very slowly. Hence, the duty of the communist proletariat in all countries is to deal very carefully and attentively with such survivals of national feeling in the longer oppressed countries and nationalities, likewise to make even certain concessions for the purpose of a more rapid conquest of the above-mentioned mistrust and prejudices. Without a voluntary striving after union and unity on the part of the proletariat, and of all the worker masses of all countries and nations of the whole world, the victory over capitalism cannot be successfully brought about.

B. The Communist Parties and the Question of Parliamentarism.

1. In many countries of Western Europe and America one of the most acute questions of Communist tactics is that of Parliamentarism. The division in the German Communist Party, the formation of an anti-parliamentary faction in the Italian party, the position of the Belgian Communist group, and lastly, the attitude of the revolutionary Syndicalist circles and the I. W. W.— all these demand precise and definite directions on this question from the Communist International.

I.

2. Parliamentarism, as a State system, is a „democratic" form of the rule of the bourgeoisie, which at a certain stage of its development needs the fiction of a national representation, that outwardly would be an organisation of the will of all the classes, but in reality would be an instrument of oppression and suppression in the hands of the ruling capitalists.

3. Parliamentarism is a definite form of State order. Therefore it can in no way be a

form of Communist society, which recognises neither classes, nor class struggle, nor any form of State authority.

4. Parliamentarism cannot be a form of *proletarian* government during the transition period between the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and that of the proletariat. At the moment when the class struggle turns into civil war the proletariat must inevitably form its organisation as a fighting organisation, which cannot contain any of the representatives of the former ruling classes; all fictions of a "national will" are harmful to the proletariat at the time, and a parliamentary division of authority is needless and injurious to it; the only form of proletarian dictatorship is a Republic of Soviets.

5. The bourgeois parliaments, which constitute one of most important apparatus of the State machinery of the bourgeoisie, cannot be won over by the proletariat any more than can the bourgeois order in general. The task of the proletariat consists in blowing up the whole machinery of the bourgeoisie, in destroying it, and all the parliamentary institutions with it, whether they be republican or constitutional-monarchical.

6. The same relates to the communal institutions of the bourgeoisie, which theoretically it is not correct to consider as State organisations. In reality they are part of the same apparatus of the State machinery of the

bourgeoisie, which must be destroyed by the revolutionary proletariat and replaced by local Soviets of Workers' Deputies.

7. Consequently, Communism repudiates parliamentarism as the form of the future; it renounces the same as a form of the class dictatorship of the proletariat; it repudiates the possibility of winning over the parliaments: its aim is to *destroy* parliamentarism. *Therefore it is only possible to speak of utilising the bourgeois state organisations with the object of destroying them.* The question can only and *exclusively* be discussed on such a plane.

II.

8. Every class struggle is a political struggle, because it is finally a struggle for power. Any strike, when it spreads through the whole country, is a threat to the bourgeois State and thus acquires a political character. To strive to overthrow the bourgeoisie and to *destroy* its State by any means whatever, means to carry on political warfare. To create one's own *class* apparatus — for the management and suppression of the resisting bourgeoisie — whatever such an apparatus may be — means to gain political power.

9. Consequently, the question of a political struggle does not end in the question of one's attitude towards the parliamentary system. It is a general condition of the class struggle of

the proletariat, in so far as the struggle grows from a small and private one to a struggle for the overthrow of the capitalistic order.

10. The elementary method of the struggle of the proletariat against the rule of the bourgeoisie, is, first of all, the method of demonstrations *en masse.* Such mass demonstrations are prepared and carried out by organised masses of the proletariat, under the direction of a united, disciplined centralised Communist Party. Civil war is war. In this war the proletariat must have its efficient political officers, its good political general staff, to command all the operations during all the stages of the fight.

11. The struggle in masses means a whole system of developing demonstrations, growing ever more acute in form and logically leading to an uprising against the capitalist order of government. In this warfare of the masses developing into a civil war, the directing party of the proletariat must, as a general rule, secure all and every lawful positon, making them its auxiliaries in the revolutionary work, and subordinating such positions to the plans of the general campaign, that of the struggle *en masse.*

12. One of such auxiliary supports is the tribune of the bourgeois parliament. Against participation in a political party struggle one should not use the argument that parliament is a bourgeois government institution.

The Communist Party enters such institution not for the purpose of organisation work, but in order to blow up the whole bourgeois machinery and the parliament itself from within (for instance, the work of Liebknecht in Germany, of the Bolsheviks in the Imperial Duma, in the "Democratic Conference", in the "Preparliament" of Kérensky, and lastly, in the "Constituent Assembly", and also in the Municipal Dumas).

13. This work within the parliaments, which consists chiefly in making revolutionary propaganda from the parliamentary tribune, the denunciation of enemies, the ideological uniting of the masses, etc., must be fully subordinated to the objects and tasks of the mass struggle outside the parliaments.

14. The following conditions are indispensable: (1) The absence of all „autonomy" for the parliamentary Communist groups, and their unconditional subordination to the Central Committee of the Party; (2) Constant control and direction by the Party Executive Committee; (3) The adaptation of parliamentary demonstrations to those going on outside the parliament; (4) Revolutionary attitude in the parliament, i. e., the absence of all "principled" fear of overstepping the limits of parliamentary regulations; (5) The execution of part of the work outside the parliament, especially in connection with the mass demonstrations, by the

Communist members of the parliament; (6) To be in constant touch with the illegal work and to profit by parliamentary immunity, as far as it exists, for these purposes; (7) An immediate remand or exclusion from the Party of any member of the parliamentary group who violates in his parliamentary work any of the orders of the Party.

15. The elective campaign must be carried on not in the sense of obtaining a maximum of votes, but in that of a revolutionary mobilisation of the masses around the mottoes of the Proletarian Revolution. The election campaign must be conducted by the entire mass of party members, not by the leaders alone; it is necessary to make use of and be in complete touch with all the demonstrations of masses (strikes, demonstrations, movements among the soldiers and sailors, etc.) going on at the given moment; it is necessary to summon all the masses of the proletarian organisations to active work.

16. In complying with all these conditions the parliamentary work must present a contrast to the dirty "politics" which is practised by the Social Democratic parties of all countries, who enter parliament with the object of supporting that "democratic" institution, or at the best to "win it over". The Communist Party can only recommend a revolutionary use of the parliament, exemplified by Karl Liebknecht, Höglund and the Bolsheviks.

III.

17. „Antiparliamentarism", in the sense of an absolute and categorical repudiation of participation in the elections and the parliamentary revolutionary work, cannot therefore bear criticism, and is a naïve childish doctrine which is founded sometimes on a healthy disgust of politicians, but which does not understand the possibilities of revolutionary parliamentarism. Besides, very often this doctrine is connected with a quite erroneous representation of the rôle of the Party, which in this case is considered not as a fighting, centralised advanced guard of the workers, but as a decentralised system of badly joined revolutionary nuclei!

18. On the other hand, an acknowledgement of the value of parliamentary work does in no wise lead to an absolute, in-all-and-any-case acknowledgement of the necessity of concrete elections and a concrete participation in parliamentary sessions. The matter depends upon a series of specific conditions. In certain combinations it may become necessary to leave the parliament. The Bolsheviks did so when they left the Pre-parliament in order to break it up, to weaken it and to set up against it the Petrograd Soviet, which was then prepared to head the uprising; they acted in the same way in the Constituent Assembly on the day of its dissolution, transferring the meeting to the Third Con-

gress of Soviets. In other circumstances a boycotting of the elections may be necessary, and a direct violent storming of the parliamentary bourgeois clique, or a participation in the elections with a boycott of the parliament itself, etc.

19. In this way, while recognising as a general rule the necessity of participating in the elections to the central parliament, and to the institutions of local selfgovernment, as well as in the work in such institutions, the Communist Party must decide the question concretely, according to the specific conditions of the given moment. Boycotting the elections or the parliament, or leaving the parliament, is allowable, chiefly when there is a chance of an immediate transformation into an armed fight for the power.

20. At the same time one must constantly bear in mind the relative unimportance of this question. If the center of gravity lies in a struggle for the power *outside* the parliament, then naturally the question of a proletarian dictatorship and a fight *in masses* for it is immeasurably greater than the secondary one of using the parliament.

21. Therefore the Communist International insists categorically that it considers any division or attempt at a division within the Communist Parties united on this aim as a crime against the Labour movement. The Congress

calls upon all the elements which are in favour of the struggle in masses for the proletarian dictatorship, under the direction of a centralised Party of the revolutionary proletariat gaining influence over all the mass-organisations of the working class—to strive for a complete unity between the Communist elements, notwithstanding any possible disgreement on the question of parliamentarism.

Draft of Instruction to the Communist Members of the Bourgeois Parliaments and to the Central Committees of Communist Parties, Whose Duty It Is to Direct the Communist Factions of the Bourgeois Parliaments.

Annex to Theses on Parliamentarism.

The opposition to the Communists entering the bourgeois parliaments is sustained mostly by the remembrance of Social Democratic parliamentarism during the epoch of the Second International. The conduct of the majority of the Social Democratic members in the bourgeois parliament was really so unprincipled and frequently treacherous, that this bitter experience cannot be forgotten by the working class.

That is why it is necessary for the Communist International, which has in the interests of the revolution advocated the utilisation of the parliamentary tribune by the Communists, to observe very strictly the activity of the Communist members and to take all measures to create a new type of revolutionary parliamentarian—Communist warrior.

To this end it is necessary that:

1. The Communist Party in general and its Central Committee should during the preparatory stage, before the parliamentary elections— inspect very carefully the quality of the personnel of the parliamentary factions. The Central Committee should be responsible for the parliamentary faction of Communists. The Central Committee shall have the undeniable right to reject any candidate of any organisation, if it is not perfectly convinced that such candidate will carry on a real Communist policy when in parliament.

The Communist Parties must desist from the old Social Democratic habit of electing as delegates only the so-called "experienced" parliamentarians, chiefly lawyers and so on. As a rule workmen should be put forward as candidates, without troubling about the fact that they may sometimes be simple rank-and-file workmen without much parliamentary experience. The Communist Party must treat with merciless contempt all elements who try to make a career by joining the party just before the elections in order to get into parliament. The Central Committees of Communist Parties must sanction the candidature of only such men who by long years of work have proved their unwavering loyalty to the working class.

2. When the elections are over, the organisations of the parliamentary factions must be wholly

in the hands of the Central Committee of the Communist Party—whether the party in general is a lawful or illegal one at the given moment. The chairman and the presidium of the parliamentary faction of Communists must be confirmed in their functions by the Central Committee of the Party. The Central Committee of the Party must have its permanent representative in the parliamentary faction with the right of veto. On all important political questions the parliamentary faction shall ask for preliminary instructions from the Central Committee of the Party.

At each forthcoming important debate of the Communists in the parliament the Central Committee shall be entitled and bound to appoint or reject the orator of the faction, to demand that he submit previously the theses of his speech or the text, for confirmation by the Central Committee, etc. Each candidate, entered in the list of the Communists, must sign a paper to the effect that at the first request of the Central Committee of the Party, he shall be bound to give up his mandate, so that the party might obtain re-elections.

3. In countries where reformist, semi-reformist or simply career-seeking elements have managed to penetrate into the parliamentary faction of the Communists (as this has already happened in several places) the Central Committees of the Communist Parties are bound to radically weed out the personnel of the factions, on the principle

that it is better for the cause of the working class to have a small but truly Communist faction, than a numerous one without a regular Communist line of conduct.

4. A Communist delegate by decision of the Central Committee is bound to combine lawful work with illegal work. In countries where the Communist delegate enjoys a certain inviolability, this must be utilised by way of rendering assistance to the illegal organisation and for the propaganda of the Party.

5. The Communist members shall make all their parliamentary work dependent on the work of the Party outside the parliament. The regular proposal of demonstrative law-projects, not for them to be passed by the bourgeois majority, but for the purposes of propaganda, agitation and organisation, must be carried on under the directions of the Party and its Central Committee.

6. In the event of labour demonstrations in the streets or other revolutionary movements, the Communist members must occupy the most conspicuous place—at the head of the proletarian masses.

7. The Communist members must enter into relations (under the control of the Party), either by writing or otherwise, with the revolutionary workmen, peasants and other workers, and not resemble in this respect the Social Democratic members, who try to enter into business relations with their constituents.

8. Each Communist member must remember that he is not a „legislator", who is bound to seek agreements with the other legislators, but an agitator of the Party, detailed into the enemy's camp in order to carry out the orders of the Party there. The Communist member is answerable not to the dispersed mass of his constituents, but to his own Communist Party— whether lawful or illegal.

9. The Communist members must speak in parliament in such a way as to be understood by every workman, peasant, washerwoman, shepherd; so that the Party might publish his speeches on sheets of paper and spread them in the most remote villages of the country.

10. The rank and file worker Communists must not be shy of speaking in the bourgeois parliaments, and not give way to the so-called experienced parliamentarians, even if such workmen are novices in parliamentary methods. In case of need the workmen members may read their speeches from notes, in order that the speech might be printed afterwards in the papers or on sheets.

11. The Communist members must make use of the parliamentary tribune to denounce not only the bourgeoisie and its hangers-on, but also for the denunciation of the social-patriots, reformists, the half-and-half politicians of the centre and other opponents of Commun-

ism, and for the propagation of the ideas of the Third International.

12. The Communist delegates, even though there should be only one or two of them in the parliament, should by their whole conduct challenge capitalism, and never forget that only such are worthy of the name of Communists— who not in words only but in deeds are the mortal enemy of the bourgeois order and its social-patriotic flunkeys.

When and Under What Conditions Soviets of Workers' Deputies Should Be Formed.

1. The Soviets of Workers' Deputies appeared for the first time in Russia in 1905, at a time when the revolutionary movement of Russian workmen was at its height. Already in 1905 the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' Deputies was taking the first instinctive steps towards a seizure of the power. And at that time the Petrograd Soviet was strong only as far as it had a chance of acquiring political power. As soon as the imperial counter-revolution rallied its forces and the Labour movement slackened, the Soviet, after a short vegetation, ceased to exist.

2. When in 1905, at the beginning of a new strong revolutionary wave, the idea began to awaken in Russia regarding the immediate organisation of Soviets of Workers' Deputies, the Bolshevik party warned the workmen against the immediate formation of the Soviets, and pointed out that such a formation would be well-timed only at the moment when the revolution would have already begun and when the

turn would have come for the direct struggle for the power.

3. At the beginning of the February revolution of 1917, when the Soviets of Workers' Deputies were transformed into Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, they drew into the sphere of their influence the widest circles of the popular masses and at once acquired a tremendous authority, because the real force was on their side, in their hands. But when the liberal bourgeoisie recovered from the suddenness of the first revolutionary blows, and when the social traitors, the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviki helped the Russian bourgeoisie to take the power into its hands, the importance of the Soviets began to dwindle. Only after the July days and after the ill-success of Kornilov's counter-revolutionary campaign, when the wider popular masses began to move, and when the threat of the counter-revolutionary bourgeois coalition government came quite near, then the Soviets began to flourish again; and they soon acquired a prominent importance in the country.

4. The history of the German and the Austrian revolutions shows the same. When the popular masses revolted, when the revolutionary wave rose so high that it washed away the strongholds of the monarchies of the Hohenzollerns and the Habsburgs, in Germany and in Austria the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies

were formed with gigantic rapidity. At first the real force was on their side, and the Soviets were well on the way to become practically the power. But owing to a whole series of historical conditions, as soon as the power began to pass to the bourgeoisie and the counter-revolutionary Social Democrats then the Soviets began to decline and lose all importance. During the days of the unsuccesful counter-revolutionary revolt of Kapp-Lüttwitz in Germany, the Soviets again resumed their activity, but when the struggle ended again in the victory of the bourgeoisie and the social-traitors, the Soviets, which had just began to revive, once more died away.

5. The above facts prove that for the formation of Soviets certain definite premises are necessary. To organise Soviets of Workers' Deputies, and transform them into Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the following conditions are necessary:

(a) A great revolutionary impulse among the widest circles of workmen and workwomen, the soldiers and the workers in general.

(b) The acuteness of a political economical crisis attaining such a degree that the power begins to slip out of the hands of the government;

(c) When in the ranks of considerable masses of the workmen and first of all when in the ranks of the Communist Party a serious decision to begin a systematic and regular struggle for the power has become ripe.

6. In the absence of these conditions the Communists may and should systematically and insistently propagate the idea of Soviets, popularise it among the masses, demonstrate to the widest circles of the population that the Soviets are the only efficient form of Government during the transition to complete Communism. But to proceed to a direct organisation of Soviets in the absence of the above three conditions is impossible.

7. The attempt of the social traitors in Germany to introduce the Soviets into the general bourgeois-democratic constitutional system, is treason to the workers' cause and deceit of the workmen. Real Soviets are possible only as a form of state organisation, relieving bourgeois democracy, breaking it up and replacing it by a dictatorship of the proletariat.

8. The propaganda of the right leaders of the Independents (Hilferding, Kautsky and others), proving the compatibility of the "Soviet system" with the bourgeois Constituent Assembly, is either a complete misunderstanding of the laws of development of a proletarian revolution, or a conscious deceiving of the working class. The Soviets are the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Constituent Assembly is the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. To unite and reconcile the dictatorship of the working class with that of the bourgeoisie is impossible.

9. The propaganda of some representatives of the Left Independents in Germany presenting the workers with a ready-made, literary plan of a "Soviet system", which has no relation whatever to the concrete process of the civil war is a doctrinary pastime which draws the workers away from their essential tasks of the real struggle for power.

10. The attempts of separate Communist groups in France, Italy, America, England to form Soviets not embracing the larger working masses and unable therefore to enter into a direct struggle for the power, are only prejudicial to the actual preparation of a Soviet revolution. Such artificial hot-house "Soviets" soon become transformed in the best of cases into small associations for propaganda of the idea of a Soviet power, and in the worst case such miserable "Soviets" are capable only of compromising the idea of the power of "Soviets" in the eyes of the popular masses.

11. At the present time there exists a special condition in Austria, where the working class has succeeded in preserving its Soviets, which unite large masses of workers. Here the situation resembles the period between February and October 1917 in Russia. The Soviets in Austria represent a considerable political force, and appear to be the embryo of a new power.

It must be understood that in such a situation the Communists ought to participate in

these Soviets, help the Soviets to penetrate into all phases of the social economic and political life of the country; they should create Communist factions within these Soviets, and by all means aid their development.

12. Soviets without a revolution are impossible. Soviets without a proletarian revolution inevitably become a parody of Soviets. The authentic Soviets of the masses are the historically revealed form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. All sincere and serious partisans of the power of Soviets should deal cautiously with the idea of Soviets, and while indefatigably propagating it among the masses, proceed to the direct realisation of such Soviets only under the conditions mentioned above.

G. Zinoviev.

Conditions for Joining the Communist International.

Theses of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

The First Constituent Congress of the Communist International did not draw up precise conditions for the joining of the Third International by separate parties. At the moment of the convocation of the First Congress, in the majority of countries there existed only Communist directions and groups.

The Second World Congress of the Communist International is assembling under different conditions. At the present moment in most countries there are not only Communist tendencies and directions, but Communist Parties and organizations.

The Communist International is more and more frequently receiving applications from parties and groups but a short time ago belonging to the Second International, now desirous of joining the Third International, but not yet really Communists.

The Second International parties and the groups of the "centre", seeing the complete hopelessness of the Second International, are trying to lean upon the ever-strengthening Com-

munist International, hoping at the same time however to preserve a certain „autonomy“ which would enable them to carry on their former opportunist or "centrist" policy.

The Communist International is beginning to be the fashion.

The desire of certain leading groups of the „centre“ to join the Third International now is an indirect confirmation of the fact that the Third International has acquired the sympathies of the majority of conscient workers of the whole world, and that it is growing stronger every day.

Under certain circumstances the Communist International may be threatened with the danger of dilution by the fluctuating and half-and-half groups, which have not yet done with the ideology of the Second International.

Besides, in some of the large parties (Italy, Sweden), the majority of which are adhering to the point of view of Communism, there iis up to this moment a considerable reformist and social pacifist wing, which is only waiting for the moment to lift its head again, begin an active "sabotage" of the proletarian revolution, and thus help the bourgeoisie and the Second International.

No Communist should forget the lessons of the Hungarian Soviet Republic.

The Union between the Hungarian Communists and the reformists cost the Hungarian proletariat very dear.

In view of this, the Second World Congress sees fit to establish the most precise conditions for the joining of new parties, and also to point out to such parties as have already joined the Communist International, the duties laid upon them.

The Second Congress of the Communist International decrees, that the conditions for joining the Communist International shall be as follows:

1. The daily propaganda must bear a truly Communist character.

All the organs of the press which are in the hands of the Party must be edited by reliable Communists, who have proved their loyalty to the cause of the proletarian revolution. The dictatorship of the proletariat should not be spoken of simply as a current well-learnt formula; it must be propagated in such a way that its necessity for each rank and file workman, workwoman, soldier, peasant should follow from every day facts, systematically recorded by our press day by day.

On the pages of the newspapers, at popular meetings, in the labour unions, in the cooperatives, in every place to which the partisans of the Third International have access, they must denounce not only the bourgeoisie, but its assistants, the reformists of all shades and colours.

2. Each organization wishing to join the Communist International shall be bound to remove

systematically and regularly from all the responsible posts in the Labour movement (Party organizations, editor's office, labour unions, parliamentary faction, cooperatives, municipalities, etc.) all reformists and partisans of the "centre", and to replace them by Communists without troubling about the fact that in the beginning it might be necessary to replace "experienced" men by rank-and-file workmen.

3. In all countries where in consequence of martial law or exceptional laws the Communists are unable to carry on their work lawfully, a combination of lawful and illegal work is absolutely necessary. The class struggle in almost all the countries of Europe and America is entering upon the phase of civil war. Under such conditions the Communists cannot have any confidence in the bourgeois laws. They are bound to create everywhere a parallel illegal apparatus, which at the decisive moment may help the Party to accomplish its duty to the Revolution.

4. An insistent systematic propaganda and agitation in the army is necessary, and the formation of Communist nuclei in each military organization. The Communists must carry on this work for the most part illegally, but a refusal to do such work would be equal to treason against the revolutionary cause, and inconsistent with their belonging to the Third International.

5. A systematic and regular propaganda in the rural districts is necessary. The working class cannot gain the victory without having at least part of the rural workers and the poorer peasants on its side, and without neutralising by its policy at least part of the other inhabitants of the country. Communist work in the rural districts is acquiring a primary importance in this epoch. It should be carried on through workmen—Communists—having connections in the country. To refuse to do this work or to transfer it to untrustworthy half-reformist hands is equal to desisting from the proletarian revolution.

6. Every party desirous of joining the Third International is bound to denounce not only open social patriotism, but also the falsehood and hypocrisy of social-pacifism: it must systematically demonstrate to the workmen that without a revolutionary overthrow of capitalism no international arbitration, no talk of disarmament, no democratic reorganization of the League of Nations will be able to save mankind from new imperialist wars.

7. Parties desirous of joining the Communist International shall be bound to recognise the necessity of a complete and absolute rupture with reformism and the policy of the centrists, and to propagate this rupture among the widest circles of members of the Party. Without this condition a consecutive Communist policy is impossible.

The Communist International demands unconditionally and peremptorily that such rupture be realised with the least possible delay. The Communist International cannot reconcile itself with the fact that such acknowledged reformists as for instance Turatti, Modigliani and others should be entitled to consider themselves members of the Third International. This would make the Third International resemble the late Second International.

8. In the question of colonies and the oppressed nationalities an especially distinct and clear line of conduct of the parties of countries whose bourgeoisie possess such colonies or oppress other nationalities is necessary. Each party desirous of belonging to the Third International shall be bound to denounce without any mercy all the tricks of "its own" imperialists in the colonies, supporting not in words only, but in deeds, all liberation movements in the colonies. It must demand the expulsion of its own imperialists from such colonies, and cultivate in the hearts of the workmen of its own country a truly fraternal attitude towards the worker population of the colonies and oppressed nationalities, and carry on a systematic agitation in its own army against any oppression of the colonial population.

9. Every party desirous of belonging to the Communist International shall be bound to carry on a systematic and persistent Communist work in the labour unions, cooperatives and other

labour organizations of the masses. It is necessary to form Communist nuclei within these organizations, which by persistent and lasting work must win over the labour unions to the side of Communism. These nuclei must constantly denounce the treachery of the social patriots and the fluctuations of the "centre". These Communist nuclei must be completely subordinated to the Party in general.

10. Any party belonging to the Communist International is bound to carry on a stubborn struggle against the Amsterdam "International" of the Yellow Labour Unions. It must insistently propagate among the organized workers the necessity of a rupture with the yellow Amsterdam International. It must support by all the means in its power the international unification of Red Labour Unions, adhering to the Communist International, which is now beginning.

11. Parties desirous of joining the Third International shall be bound to reinspect the personnel of their parliamentary factions, remove all unreliable elements therefrom, subordinate such factions not verbally only, but in reality, to the Central Committee of the Party, and demand from each proletarian Communist to submit his whole work to the interests of real revolutionary propaganda.

12. In the same way should all the periodical and other press and all publications be fully subordinated to the Central Committee, whether

the Party as a whole at the given moment is lawful or illegal; it is quite inadmissible that any publishers abusing their autonomy might carry on a policy different from that of the Party.

13. The parties belonging to the Communist International must be organized on the principles of democratic centralism. At the present moment of acute civil war the Communist Party will be able to fulfill its duty only if it is organized in the most centralised form, if it is ruled by an iron discipline, almost a military one, and if its Party centre is an organ of authority with full power, enjoying the complete confidence of the members of the Party.

14. The Communist Parties of countries where the Communists may carry on their work lawfully, must periodically weed out (by re-registration) the personnel of the Party organisations, in order to clean the Party systematically from all the petty bourgeois elements which inevitably creep into it.

15. Each Party desirous of belonging to the Communist International shall be bound to render all possible aid to the Soviet Republics in their struggle against counter-revolutionary forces. The Communist Parties shall carry on an unfailing propaganda to induce the workers to refuse to transport objects of military equipment addressed to the enemies of the Soviet Republics, and also by lawful means or illegally to carry

on a propaganda among the troops sent out against the Workers Republics, etc.

16. The Parties which up to the present moment have stood upon the old Social and Democratic programs within the shortest time possible, and to draw up a new Communist program in conformity with the special conditions of their country, and in accordance with the resolutions of the Communist International. As a rule the program of each Party belonging to the Communist International must be confirmed by the next Congress of the Communist International or its Executive Committee. In the event of nonconfirmation of the program of any Party by the Executive Committee of the Communist International, said party shall be entitled to appeal to the Congress of the Communist International.

17. All the resolutions of the congresses of the Communist International, as well as the resolutions of its Executive Committee, are binding for all parties joining the Communist International. The Communist International, operating under the conditions of most acute civil warfare, must be organised in a more centralised form than the Second International. At the same time the Communist International and its Executive Committee are naturally bound in all their work to consider the variety of conditions under which the different Parties have to work and struggle, and

generally binding resolutions shall be passed only on such questions, on which such resolutions are possible.

18. In connection with the above all Parties desiring to join the Communist International must alter their names.

Each Party desirous of joining the Communist International must bear the following name: Communist Party of such-and-such country (Section of Third Communist International). The question of denomination of a party is not only a formal one, but it is a political question of great importance. The Communist International has declared a decisive war against the whole bourgeois world and all yellow Social Democratic Parties. It is necessary that each rank-and-file worker should be able to distinguish clearly the difference between the Communist Parties and the old official "Social Democratic" or "Socialist" parties, which have betrayed the cause of the working class.

Theses on the Fundamental Tasks of the Second Congress of the Communist International.

1. A characteristic feature of the present moment in the development of the international Communist movement is the fact that in all the capitalist countries the best representatives of the revolutionary proletariat have completely understood the fundamental principles of the Communist International, namely: the dictatorship of the proletariat and the power of the Soviets; and with a loyal enthusiasm have placed themselves on the side of the Communist International. A still more important and great step forward is the unlimited sympathy with these principles manifested by the wider masses not only of the proletariat of the towns, but also by the advanced portion of the agrarian workers.

On the other hand two mistakes or weaknesses of the extraordinarily rapid increasing International Communist movement have shown themselves. One, very serious and presenting a great direct danger for the success of the cause of the liberation of the proletariat, consists in the

fact that part of the old leaders and old parties of the Second International, partly half-unconsciously yielding to the wishes and pressure of the masses, partly consciously deceiving them in order to preserve their former rôle of agents and supporters of the bourgeoisie inside the Labour movement, are declaring their conditional or even unconditional joining of the Third International, while remaining in reality, in the whole practice of their party and political work, on the level of the Second International. Such a state of things is absolutely inadmissible, because it demoralises the masses, lowers their respect for the Third International by threatening a repetition of such betrayals as that of the Hungarian Social Democrats, who had rapidly assumed the disguise of Communists. The second much less important mistake, which is for the most part a malady inherent to the rapid growth of the movement, is the tendency to be extremely "left", which leads to an erroneous valuation of the rôle and duties of the Party in respect to the class and to the mass, and the obligation of the revolutionary Communists to work in the bourgeois parliaments and reactionary Labour unions.

The duty of the Communists is not to gloss over any of the weaknesses of their movement, but to criticise them openly, in order to get rid of them promptly and radically. To this end it is necessary, (1) to establish concretely,

especially on the basis of the already acquired practical experience the meaning of the terms: "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" and "Soviet Power"; and (2) to point out in what could and should consist in all countries the immediate and systematic preparatory work to realising these formulas; and (3) to indicate the ways and means of freeing our movement from its defects.

I. The Substance of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and of the Soviet Power.

2. The victory of Socialism (as the first step of Communism) over capitalism demands the accomplishment of the three following tasks by the proletariat, as the only really revolutionary class:

The first is to lay low the exploiters, and first of all the bourgeoisie as their chief economic and political representative, to completely defeat them, to crush their resistance, to render impossible any attempts on their part to reinstate the yoke of capitalism and wage slavery.

The second is to inspire and lead in the footsteps of the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat, its Communist party—not only the whole proletariat or its larger majority, but the entire mass of workers and exploited by capital, to enlighten, organise, instruct, and discipline them during the course of the bold and mercilessly firm struggle against the exploiters;

to wrench this enormous majority of the population in all the capitalist countries out of their state of dependence on the bourgeoisie; to instil in them, through practical experience, confidence in the leading rôle of the proletariat and its revolutionary vang uard.

The third is to neutralise or render harmless the inevitable fluctuations between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between bourgeois democracy and Soviet Power, on the part of that rather numerous class in all advanced countries—although constituting a minority of the population—the small owners and proprietors in agriculture, industry, commerce, and the corresponding layers of intellectuals, employees, and so on.

The first and second tasks are independant ones, demanding each of them its special methods of action in respect to the exploiters and to the exploited. The third task results from the two first, demanding only a skilful, timely, supple combination of the methods of the first and second kinds, depending on the concrete circumstances of each separate case of fluctuation.

3. Under the circumstances which have been created in the whole world, and most of all in the most advanced, powerful, most enlightened and free capitalist countries by militarist imperialism, oppression of colonies and the weaker nations, the universal imperialist slaughter, the "peace" of Versailles, to admit the idea of a voluntary submission of the capitalists to the will

of the majority of the exploited—of a peaceful, reformist passage to Socialism—is not only to give proof of an extreme petty bourgeois dull-headedness, but it is a direct deceiving of the workmen, a disguising of capitalist wage-slavery, a concealment of the truth. This truth consists in the fact that the bourgeoisie, the most enlightened and democratic bourgeoisie, is even now not stopping before deceit and crime, before the slaughter of millions of workmen and peasants, for the retainment of the right of private ownership over the means of production. Only a forcible defeat of the bourgeoisie, the confiscation of its property, the annihilation of the entire bourgeois government apparatus, from top to bottom,—parliamentary, juridical, military, bureaucratic, administrative, municipal, etc., up to the individual exile or internment of the most stubborn and dangerous exploiters, the establishment of a strict control over them for the repressing of all inevitable attempts at resistance and restoration of capitalist slavery—only such measures will be able to guarantee the complete submission of the whole class of exploiters.

On the other hand, it is the same disguising of capitalism and bourgeois democracy, the same deceiving of the workmen, when the old parties and old leaders of the Second International admit the idea that the majority of the workers and exploited will be able to acquire a clear

Socialist consciousness, firm Socialist convictions and character under the conditions of capitalist enslavement, under the yoke of the bourgeoisie, which assumes an endless variety of forms—the more refined and at the same time the more cruel and pitiless, the more cultured the given capitalist nation. In reality it is only when the vanguard of the proletariat, supported by the whole class as the only revolutionary one, or a majority of the same, will have overthrown the exploiters, crushed them, freed all the exploited from their position of slaves, improved their conditions of life immediately at the expense of the expropriated capitalists—only after that, and during the very course of the acute class struggle, will it be possible to realise the enlightenment, education and organisation of the widest masses of workers and exploited around the proletariat, under its influence and direction, to cure them of their egotism, their non-solidarity, their vices and weaknesses engendered by private ownership, and to transform them into free workers.

4. For the success of the victory over capitalism a correct correlation between the leading Communist Party—the revolutionary class, the proletariat—and the masses, i. e. the whole mass of workers and exploited, is essential. Only the Communist Party, if it is really the vanguard of the revolutionary class, if it includes the best representatives of the class, if

it consists of perfectly conscious and loyal Communists, enlightened by the experience gained in the stubborn revolutionary struggle— only if this Party is able to become bound indissolubly with the entire life of its class, and through the latter with the whole mass of the exploited, and to inspire full confidence in this class and this mass, only such a Party is capable of leading the proletariat in the most pitiless decisive last struggle against all the forces of capitalism. On the other hand, only under the leadership of such a Party will the proletariat be able to deploy all the force of its revolutionary onslaught, nullifying the inevitable apathy and partial resistance of the insignificant minority of the demoralised labour aristocracy, the old Trade Union and guild leaders, etc. Only then will the proletariat be able to deploy its power, which is immeasurably greater than its share in the population, by reason of the economic organisation of capitalist society itself. Lastly, only when practically freed from the yoke of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois governing apparatus, only after acquiring the possibility of freely (from all capitalist exploitation) organising into its own Soviets, will the mass—i. e. the total of all the workers and exploited—deploy for the first time in history all the initiative and energy of tens of millions of people, formerly crushed by capitalism. Only when the Soviets will become the only State apparatus,

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will effectual participation in the administration be realised for the entire mass of the exploited, who even under the most cultured and free bourgeois democracy remained practically excluded from participation in the administration. Only in the Soviets does the mass really begin to study, not out of books, but out of its own practical experience, the work of Socialist construction, the creation of a new social discipline, a free union of free workers.

II. In What Should the Immediate and Universal Preparation for a Dictatorship of the Proletariat Consist?

5. The present moment in the development of the International Communist movement is characterised by the fact that in a great majority of capitalist countries the preparation of the proletariat to the realisation of its dictatorship is not yet completed—very often it has not even been begun systematically. It does not follow that the proletarian revolution is not possible in the most immediate future; it is quite possible, because the economic and political situation is extraordinarily rich in inflammable material and causes of its sudden inflammation; the other condition for a revolution, besides the preparedness of the proletariat, namely the general state of crisis in all the ruling and all the bourgeois parties, is

also at hand. But it follows from the above that the duty, for the moment of the Communist Parties consists not in accelerating the revolution, but in continuing to prepare the proletariat. On the other hand, the above instance in the history of many Socialist parties draws our attention to the fact, that the "recognition" of the dictatorship of the proletariat should not remain only verbal.

Therefore the principal duty of the Communist Parties, from the point of view of an international proletarian movement, is at the present moment the uniting of the dispersed Communist forces, the formation in each country of a single Communist party (or the strengthening and renovation of the already existing one) in order to multiply the work of preparing the proletariat for the conquest of the governing power, and especially for the acquisition of the power in the form of a dictatorship of the groups and parties recognising the dictatorship of the proletariat, has not been sufficiently subject to the radical reformation, the radical renovation which are necessary for it to be recognised as Communist work, and corresponding to the tasks of the eve of proletarian dictatorship.

6. The conquest of political power by the proletariat does not put a stop to its class struggle against the bourgeoisie; on the contrary it makes the struggle especially broad, acute and pitiless. All the groups, parties, leaders of the

Labour movement, fully or partially on the side of reformism, the "centre" and so on, turn inevitably, during the most acute moments of the struggle, either to the side of the bourgeoisie or to that of the fluctuating ones, or the most dangerous add to the number of the unreliable friends of the vanquished proletariat. Therefore the preparation of the dictatorship of the proletariat demands not only an increased struggle against all reformist and "centrist" tendencies, but a modification of the nature of this struggle.

The struggle should not be limited by an explanation of the erroneousness of such tendencies, but it should stubbornly and mercilessly denounce any leader in the Labour movement who may be manifesting such tendencies, otherwise the proletariat will not know whom it must trust in the most decisive struggle against the bourgeoisie. This struggle is such, that at any moment it may replace and has replaced, as experience has proved, the weapon of criticism by the criticism of the weapon. The least non-consecutiveness or weakness in the denunciation of those who show themselves to be reformists or "centrists", means a direct increase of the danger of the power of the proletariat being overthrown by the bourgeoisie, which will on the morrow utilise in favour of the counter-revolution all that which to short-sighted people appears only as a "theoretical difference of opinion" to-day.

7. In particular one cannot stop at the usual doctrinary refutation of all "collaboration" between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

The simple defense of "liberty and equality", under the condition of preserving the right of private ownership of the means of production, becomes transformed under the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat — which will never be able to suppress completely all private ownership — into a "collaboration" with the bourgeoisie, which undermines directly the power of the working class. The dictatorship of the proletariat means the strengthening and defense, by means of the ruling power of the State, of the "non-liberty" of the exploiter to continue his work of oppression and exploitation, of the "inequality" of the proprietor (i. e. of the person who has taken for himself personally the means of production created by public labour) and the proletariat. That which before the victory of the proletariat seems but a theoretical difference of opinion on the question of "democracy", becomes inevitably on the morrow, after the victory, a question which can only be decided by force of arms. Consequently, without a radical modification of the whole nature of the struggle against the "centrists" and "defenders of democracy", even a preliminary preparation of the mass for the realisation of a dictatorship of the proletariat is impossible.

8. The dictatorship of the proletariat is the most decisive and revolutionary form of class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Such a struggle can be successful only when the most revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat will lead the greatest majority of it. The preparation of the dictatorship of the proletariat demands therefore not only the elucidation of the bourgeois nature of all reformism, all defense of "democracy", with the preservation of the right to the ownership of the means of production; not only the denunciation of such tendencies, which in practice mean the defense of the bourgeoisie inside the Labour movement — but it demands also the replacing of the old leaders by Communists in all kinds of proletarian organizations, not only political, but industrial, cooperative, educational, etc. The more lasting, complete and solid has the rule of the bourgeois democracy been in any country, the more has it been possible for the bourgeoisie to appoint as labour leaders men who have been educated by it, imbued with its views and prejudices and very frequently directly or indirectly bribed by it. It is necessary to remove a hundred times more boldly all these representatives of the Labour aristocracy, or such "bourgeois" workmen, from their posts and replace them by even inexperienced workers, so long as these are in unity with the exploited masses, and enjoy the latter's confidence in

the struggle against the exploiters. The dictatorship of the proletariat will demand the appointment of such inexperienced workmen to the most responsible State functions, otherwise the rule of the Labour government will be powerless and it will not have the support of the masses.

9. The dictatorship of the proletariat is the most complete realisation of a leadership over all workers and exploited, who have been oppressed, beaten down, crushed, frightened, dispersed, deceived by the class of capitalists, on the part of the only class prepared for such a leading rôle by the whole history of capitalism. Therefore the preparation of the dictatorship of the proletariat must be begun immediately and in all places by means of the following method, among others:

In every organization, union, association — beginning with the proletarian ones at first, and afterwards in all those of the non-proletarian workers and exploited masses (political, professional, military, cooperative, educational, sporting, etc.) must be formed groups or nucleii of Communists—mostly open ones, but also secret ones which become obligatory in each case when their closure may be expected, or the arrest or exile of their members on the part of the bourgeoisie; and these nucleii, in close contact with one another and with the central Party, exchanging experiences, carrying on the work of propaganda, campaign, organization, adapting

themselves to all the branches of social life, to all the various forms and subdivisions of the worker masses, must systematically train themselves, the Party, the class and the masses by such multiform work.

At the same time it is most important to elaborate practically the necessary development of the methods of the whole work, on the one hand in respect to the "leaders" or responsible representatives, who are very frequently hopelessly infected with petty bourgeois and imperialist prejudices; on the other hand in respect to the masses, who, especially after the imperialist slaughter, are mostly inclined to listen to and accept the doctrine of the necessity of leadership of the proletariat as the only way out of capitalistic enslavement. The masses must be approached with patience and caution, in order to understand the peculiarities, the special psychology of each layer, profession, and so on, of these masses.

10. In particular one of the groups or nuclei; of the Communists deserves the exclusive attention and care of the party, namely, the parliamentary faction, i. e. the group of members of the Party who are members of bourgeois representative institutions (first of all a governmental one, then local, municipal and others). On the one hand, such a tribune has a special importance in the eyes of the wider circles of the backward or prejudiced working masses,

therefore from this very tribune the Communists must carry on their work of propaganda, agitation, organization, explaining to the masses why the dissolution of the bourgeois parliament (Constituent Assembly) by the national Congress of Soviets was a legitimate proceeding at the time in Russia (as it will be in all countries in due time). On the other hand, the whole history of the bourgeois democracy has made out of the parliamentary tribune, especially in the more advanced countries, the chief, or one of the chief, means of unbelievable financial and political swindles, the possibility of making a career, hypocrisy, oppression of the workers. Therefore, the deep hatred against all parliaments on the part of the best representatives of the revolutionary proletariat is perfectly lawful. Therefore, on the part of the Communist Parties, and all parties adhering to the Third International, especially in cases when such parties have become formed not by means of a division in the old parties and after a lasting stubborn struggle against them, but by means of the old parties passing over (often nominally) to a new position, it is necessary to be very strict in their attitude towards their parliamentary factions, demanding their complete subordination to the control and the directions of the Central Committee of the party; to include in them mostly revolutionary workmen; to carry out at Party

meetings a most attentive analysis of the Party press and of the parliamentary speeches, from the point of view of their Communist integrity: to detail the parliament members for propaganda among the masses; to exclude from such factions all those who show a tendency towards the Second International, and so forth.

11. One of the chief causes of difficulty in the revolutionary Labour movement in the advanced capitalist countries lies in the fact that owing to colonial dominions and super-dividends of financial capital, etc., capital has been able to separate a comparatively more solid and broader group of a small minority of the labour aristocracy. The latter enjoys better conditions of pay and is most of all impregnated with the spirit of professional narrow-mindedness, bourgeois and imperialist prejudices. This is the true social "support" of the Second International reformists and centrists, and at the present moment almost the chief social support of the bourgeoisie.

Not even preliminary preparation of the proletariat for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie is possible without an immediate, systematic, widely organized and open struggle against this group which undoubtedly—as experience has already proved—will furnish plenty of men for the White Guards of the bourgeoisie after the victory of the proletariat. All the parties adhering to the Third International must at all costs put into

practice the mottoes: "Deeper into the masses", "In closer contact with the masses", understanding by the word "masses" the entire mass of workers and those exploited by capitalism, especially the less organized and enlightened, the most oppressed and less adaptable to organisation.

The proletariat becomes revolutionary in so far as it is not enclosed within narrow guild limits, in so far as it participates in all the events and branches of public life, as a leader of the whole working and exploited mass; and it is completely impossible for it to realise its dictatorship unless it is ready for and capable of everything for the victory over the bourgeoisie. The experience of Russia in this respect has a theoretical and practical importance; where the proletariat could not have realised its dictatorship, nor acquired the respect and confidence of whole working mass, if it had not borne most of the sacrifices and had not suffered from hunger more than all the other groups in this mass, during the most difficult moments of the onslaught, war and blockade on the part of the universal bourgeoisie.

In particular it is necessary for the Communist Party and the whole advanced proletariat to give the most absolute and self-denying support to all the masses of a larger general strike movement, which is alone able under the yoke of capitalism to awaken properly, arouse, enlighten and organize the masses, and develop in them a

full confidence in the leading rôle of the revolutionary proletariat. Without such a preparation no dictatorship of the proletariat will be possible, and those who are capable of preaching against strikes, like Kautsky in Germany, Turatti in Italy, are not to be suffered in the ranks of parties adhering to the Third International. This concerns still more, naturally, such trade union and parliamentary leaders, who often betray the workmen by teaching them reformism by means of strikes, not revolution (for instance, in England and France during the last years).

12. For all countries, even for the most free "legal" and "peaceful" ones in the sense of a lesser acuteness in the class struggle the period has arrived when it has become absolutely necessary for every Communist party to join systematically all lawful and illegal work, lawful and illegal organization.

In the most enlightened and free countries, with a most "solid" bourgeois-democratic régime, the governments are systematically recurring, in spite of their false and hypocritical assurances, to the method of keeping secret lists of Communists, to endless violations of their constitutions for the semi-secret support of White Guards and the murder of Communists in all countries, to secret preparations for the arrest of Communists, the introduction of provocators among the Communists, etc. Only the most reactionary petty

bourgeoisie, by whatever high-sounding "democratic" or pacifist phrases it might disguise its ideas can dispute this fact or the necessary conclusion; an immediate formation by all lawful Communist Parties of illegal organisations for systematic illegal work, for their complete preparation at any moment against any active steps on the part of the bourgeoisie. It is especially necessary to carry on illegal work in the army, navy and police, as after the imperialist slaughter all the governments in the world are becoming afraid of the national armies, open to all peasants and workmen, and they are setting up in secret all kinds of select military organizations recruited from the bourgeoisie and specially provided with improved technical equipment.

On the other hand, it is also necessary in all cases without exception not to limit oneself to illegal work, but to carry on also lawful work overcoming all difficulties, founding a lawful press and lawful organisations under the most various, and in case of need, frequently changing names. This is now being done by the illegal Communist parties in Finland, Hungary, partly in Germany, Poland, Latvia, etc. It is thus that the I. W. W. in America should act, as well as all the lawful Communist Parties at present, in case prosecutors start prosecutions on the basis of resolutions of the congresses of the Communist International, etc.

The absolute necessity principle of illegal and lawful work is determined not only by the total aggregate of all the peculiarites of the given moment, on the very eve of a proletarian dictatorship, but by the necessity of proving to the bourgeoisie, that there is not and cannot be any branch of the work, which the Communists have not possessed themselves of — and still more by the fact that everywhere there are still wide circles of the proletariat and greater ones of the non-proletarian workers and exploited masses, which still trust in the bourgeois democracy, and the dissuasion from which is our most important duty.

13. In particular, the situation of the Labour press in the more advanced capitalist countries shows with special evidence both the falseness of liberty and equality under the bourgeois democracy, and the necessity of a systematic blending of the lawful and illegal work. Both in vanquished Germany and in victorious America all the power of the governmental apparatus of the bourgeoisie, and all the tricks of its financial kings are being set in motion in order to deprive the workmen of their press; prosecutions and arrests (or murder by means of hired murderers) of the editors, prohibition of sending by mail, depriving of paper, etc. Moreover, the information necessary for a daily paper is in the hands of bourgeois telegraph agencies, and the advertisements,

without which a large paper cannot pay its way, are at the "free" disposal of capitalists. On the whole, by means of deceit, the pressure of capital and the bourgeois government, the bourgeoisie deprives the revolutionary proletariat of its press.

For the struggle against this state of things the Communist parties must create a new type of periodical press for extensive circulation among the workmen: (1) Lawful publications, in which the Communists, without calling themselves such and without mentioning their connection with the party, would learn to utilise the slightest possibility allowed by the laws, as the Bolsheviki did at the time of the Tsar, after 1905. (2) Illegal sheets, although of the smallest dimensions and irregularly published, but reproduced in most of the printing offices by the workmen (in secret, or if the movement has grown stronger, by means of a revolutionary seizure of the printing offices) and giving the proletariat undiluted revolutionary information and the revolutionary mottoes.

Without Communist press the preparation for the dictatorship of the proletariat is impossible.

III. The Amendment of the Policy—Partly Also of the Make-up—of the Parties Adhering or Willing to Adhere to the Communist International.

14. The degree of preparedness of the proletariat to carry out its dictatorship, in the countries most important from the view-point of world

economics and world politics, is manifested mos objectively and precisely by the fact that the most influential parties of the Second International, the French Socialist Party, the Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany, the Independent Labour Party of England, the American Socialist Party, have gone out of this yellow International and have passed resolutions to join the Third International, the first three conditionally, the latter unconditionally. This proves that not only the vanguard but the majority of the proletariat has begun to pass over to our side, persuaded thereto by the whole course of events. The chief thing now is to know how to complete this passage and solidly, structurally strengthen it, so as to be able to advance along the whole line, without the slightest hesitation.

15. The whole activity of the above-mentioned parties (to which must be added the Swiss Socialist Party if the telegraphic reports regarding its resolution to join the Third International are correct) proves—and any given periodical paper of these parties confirms it—that they are not Communist as yet, and frequently even are in direct opposition to the fundamental principles of the Third International, namely: the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and of Soviet power instead of the bourgeois democracy.

Therefore the Second Congress of the Communist International should announce that it does not consider it possible to receive these parties

immediately; that it confirms the answer of the Executive Committee of the Third International to the German Independents; that it confirms its readiness to carry on negotiations with any party leaving the Second International and desiring to join the Third; that it reserves the right of a consultative vote to the delegate of such parties at all its congresses and conferences, and that it proposes the following conditions for a complete union of these (and similar) parties with the Communist International:

1. The publishing of all the resolutions passed by all the congresses of the Communist International and by the Executive Committee, in all the periodical publications of the party.

2. Their discussion at the special meetings of all sections and local organizations of the party.

3. The convocation, after such a discussion, of a special congress of the party for the summarising of the results, etc.

4. The weeding out from the party of all elements which continue to act in the spirit of the Second International.

5. The transfer of all periodical papers of the party into the hands of Communist editors.

The Second Congress of the Third International must charge its Executive Committee to receive formally the above-named and similar parties into the Third International after a preliminary verification that all these conditions

have been fulfilled, and that the nature of the activity of the party has become Communist.

16. In regard to the question as to what must be the line of conduct of the Communists at present constituting the minority at the responsible posts of the above-named and similar parties, the Second Congress of the Third International should establish, that in view of the evident growth of the sincerest sympathies for Communism among the workmen belonging to these parties, it would be undesirable for the Communists to leave the parties, so long as they are able to carry on their work within the parties in the spirit of a recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of the criticism of all opportunists and centrists still remaining in these parties.

At the same time the Second Congress of the Third International must declare itself in favour of the Communist Party, and the groups and organizations sympathising with Communism in England, joining the Labour Party, nothwithstanding the circumstance that this party is a member of the Second International. The reason for this is that so long as this party will allow all constituent organisations their present freedom of criticism and freedom of propaganda, and organizational activity in favour of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the power of Soviets, so long as this party preserves its principle of uniting all the indus-

trial organizations of the working class, the Communists ought to take all measures and even consent to certain compromises, in order to be able to exercise an influence over the wider circles of workmen and the masses, to denounce their opportunist leaders from a higher tribune, to accelerate the transfer of the political power from the direct representatives of the bourgeoisie to the "Labour lieutenants of the capitalist class", so that the masses may be more rapidly cured of all illusions on this subject.

17. In regard to the Italian Socialist Party, the Second Congress of the Third International considers as perfectly correct the criticism of this Party and the practical propositions which are stated, as propositions to the Regional Council of the Italian Socialist Party on behalf of the Turin section of this Party in the paper "New Order" (L'Ordine Nuovo) dated May 8th, 1920, and which completely correspond with the fundamental principles of the Third International.

Therefore the Second Congress of the Third International requests the Italian Socialist Party to convene an extraordinary congress of the party for the discussion of these propositions and the resolutions of both congresses of the Communist International, for the amendment of the line of conduct of the party and its cleansing of all non-Communist elements, in particular in its parliamentary faction.

18. The Second Congress of the Third International considers as not correct the views regarding the relations of the Party to the class and to the masses, and the non-participation of the Communist Parties in the bourgeois parliaments and reactionary Labour unions, which have been precisely refuted in the special resolutions of the present congress, and defended in full by the "Communist Labour Party of Germany" and also partially by the "Communist Party of Switzerland", by the organ of the West European secretariat of the Communist International "Communismus" in Amsterdam, and by several of our Dutch comrades; further by certain Communist organisations in England, as for instance "The Workers' Socialist Federation". Also by the "I. W. W." in America, the "Shop Steward Committees" in England, and so forth.

Nevertheless, the Second Congress of the Third International considers possible and desirable the immediate affiliation of such of these organizations which have not already done so officially, because in the given case, especially as regards the I. W. W. of America and Australia, and the "Shop Steward Committees" of England, we have to deal with a deeply proletarian mass movement, which practically shares the principles of the Communist International. In such organizations any mistaken views on the question of participation in the bourgeois parliaments, are to be explained not so much by

the rôle of members of the bourgeoisie advocating their own petty bourgeois views, as the views of the Anarchists frequently are, but by the political inexperience of proletarians who are, nevertheless, completely revolutionary and in contact with the masses.

The Second Congress of the Third International requests therefore all the Communist organizations and groups in the Anglo-Saxon countries, even in case immediate union between the Third International and the "Industrial Workers of the World" and the "Shop Steward Committees" does not take place, to carry on a policy of the most friendly attitude toward these organizations, to enter into closer connection with them and the masses sympathising with them, to explain to them in a friendly way, from the point of view of all revolutions and the three Russian revolutions in the Twentieth Century especially, the erroneousness of their above-stated views, and not to desist from repeated attempts to become united with these organizations so as to form one Communist Party.

19. In connection with this the Congress draws the attention of all comrades, especially in the Latin and Anglo-Saxon countries, to the fact that among the Anarchists since the war all over the world a deep ideological scission is taking place upon the question of their attitude towards the dictatorship of the proletariat and the power of

Soviets. And it is just among the proletarian elements, which were frequently led into Anarchism by their perfectly justified hatred of the opportunism and reformism of the parties of the Second International, that there is to be noticed a perfectly correct understanding of these principles, especially among those who are more nearly acquainted with the experience of Russia, Finland, Hungary, Lettland, Poland and Germany.

The Congress considers it the duty of all comrades to support by all measures all the masses of proletarian elements passing from Anarchism to the Third International. The Congress points out that the success of the work of the truly Communist Parties ought to be measured, among other things, by how far they have been able to attract to their party all the uneducated, not petty-bourgeois, but proletarian masses from Anarchism.

N. Lenin.

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